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# Among the Boers.

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Next in interest and value to the text—and this is saying a great deal, for Mr. Sala's text is simply delightful—are the illustrations to this book, which are from the pencils of no less remarkable and famous artists than Bertall, Cham—poor Cham!—Pelcoq, Grévin, Gill, Marié, Morin, Deroy, Lalanne, &c. Years hence these pictures of Parisian life and manners will be consulted with the same degree of interest as are those of Hogarth and Cruikshank with respect to the London of the past. Every phase of Parisian life is touched with infinite tact and fidelity.—*The Morning Post.*

Full of interest both for those who know Paris as she was under the Empire and those who have yet to make the acquaintance of the gayest capital in Europe. The copious illustrations, many of which are by artists of mark—including the great Cham—form an attractive feature in these agreeable volumes of chit-chat, which are produced in a style not out of keeping with the value of their contents.—*The Globe.*

The truth is that Mr. Sala knows Paris, as the French would say, "comme sa poche;" and he turns it inside out, but always, we must confess, to find something in it. . . . Mr. Sala apparently cannot help making every thing interesting, for he suffuses it with his own particular and distinctive self. Thus, he is not so much an author as a companion, and we fancy most persons will find him the best company in the world. . . . Wonderful, perennial Paris, with the secret of youth, or of that second youth, called vigorous, practical, conquering, understanding middle age. She has had many panegyrists, and unfortunately only too many flatterers, some satirists, never a rival, nor ever a better chronicler than Mr. Sala.—*The Observer.*

REMINGTON & Co., 5, ARUNDEL STREET, STRAND, W.C.



KAFFIR FAMILY AT TIFFIN.

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# AMONG THE BOERS:

OR, NOTES OF

## A TRIP TO SOUTH AFRICA IN SEARCH OF HEALTH.

BY

JOHN NIXON.

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*ILLUSTRATED.*

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TO THE

RIGHT HON. SIR MICHAEL EDWARD HICKS-BEACH, BART., M.P., etc.,

Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies,

as a slight tribute to his own personal worth,

and

in appreciation of the sympathetic and intelligent Colonial policy,

of which he is so fitting a representative,

THIS WORK

is (by special permission)

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

# PREFACE.

THE following pages are intended for two classes of readers.—First, for the general reader, and secondly, and incidentally, for persons in search of a climate suitable for threatened, or actual pulmonary disease. This double purpose has led me into more than usual detail in apparently trivial matters, but I am not without hope that the very minuteness of the narrative may be appreciated by some of my healthy readers, as leading to a more vivid realisation of the lights and shades of life up country.

The value of the work, as a book for invalids, is much enhanced by the kindness of Dr. Theodore Williams, who, at my request, has been good enough to peruse the proof-sheets of a chapter which I have inserted for their special benefit, and to make some valuable suggestions and additions. It is unnecessary for me to point out that the weight of such an eminent authority on chest diseases confers on the chapter a standing which I should not have ventured to claim for it otherwise.

I have studiously avoided referring to other works on South Africa, so as to give my readers the benefit (if it be so considered) of original impressions. The only portions which have been compiled from any books are the Chapter on the "Great Trek," and the Invalids' and Emigrants' Chapter.

The illustrations are from photographs partly taken by myself, and partly bought *en route*.

The issue of the book has been delayed hitherto for various reasons; and it has been published at the last moment, under circumstances of pressure, occasioned by my having been ordered a second time to South Africa.

THE AUTHOR.

November, 1879.

# AMONG THE BOERS.

## CHAPTER I.

### ENGLAND TO WORCESTER.

In the autumn of the year 1875, I took a walking tour across Tyrol. I had the bad fortune to drink some impure water and caught typhoid fever. I was laid up at a small village in the Dolomite Alps, and for a short time was in danger of life. Fortunately I weathered the attack and returned to England just before the winter began. I recovered from the immediate effects of the fever, and had begun to congratulate myself on my restoration to health, when in 1876 I was again struck down with inflammation of the lungs, the result of the fever poison. As soon as I got a little better, I was sent to Bournemouth, and afterwards to Davos Platz, an Alpine village in the Graubünden in Switzerland, 5,000 odd feet above sea level, where the dryness and rarefied air did me good. The result of the experiment was so encouraging, that my doctor advised me to try the dry air of the elevated plains of South Africa for the winter, and I resolved to take his advice. The two inducements which determined me in favour of that country were the dryness and the elevation above sea level, which I was made to understand equalled that of Davos.

In addition to this it would be summer there when it was winter in Europe.

Two or three weeks before I left England, a companion unexpectedly turned up in the person of R, a friend with hunting and shooting proclivities, who had heard of my intention, and who, at a short notice, volunteered to accompany me. Our plans were soon completed, and on the 26th October, 1877, we left Plymouth by the Union steamer "American" *en route* for Port Elizabeth. We had chosen that Port after some deliberation as being the nearest to Bloemfontein, the capital of the Free State, but neither of us knew much about the road from Port Elizabeth, or in fact about South Africa in general, which was comparatively a *terra incognita* before the Zulu war attracted attention to it. We were not alone in being unacquainted with the ordinary geographical features of the country. Several of my friends when I told them I was going to the Orange Free State asked—"And what is the Orange Free State?" The ignorance of ordinary English people on South African matters is not to be wondered at, when it is remembered that not so very long ago a government department gravely ordered a military chaplain to take duty at King Williamstown in the morning and Maritzburg in the afternoon. The joke will be properly appreciated when it is understood that one place is in Cape Colony and the other in Natal, and that they are about three hundred miles apart, the two colonies being separated from one another by the barbarous tribes of Kaffirland. We were not much behindhand therefore in not being over

well informed about the country we were going to visit.

There are two lines of steamers between England and the Cape, which sail *viâ* Madeira and the western side of Africa. It is also possible to reach the South African ports *viâ* the Red Sea, Aden, and Zanzibar. The latter route is expensive, and takes a long time, and is consequently little used. The west coast steamers reach Cape Town in about twenty-three days from Plymouth. Some of the steamers lately put on have done the voyage in less time. The Union Company were the pioneers of steam navigation to the Cape. They despatch steamers from Southampton every alternate Thursday, and from Plymouth the day after. The other line, which is owned by Messrs. Donald Currie and Company, runs from London *viâ* Dartmouth on the other two weeks of the month. The competition between the rival lines is very keen, and has helped materially to cheapen and extend the means of carriage between the colonies and the mother country.

The "American" was laden with invalids. Some were bound for Madeira, and some to the Cape. Most had bad lungs. There were a few sound persons on board. Among these were several colonists returning to their homes in the Colony, and some Germans bound for Zanzibar. There was an Engineer on his way to a solitary camp up country, with whom I afterwards spent many pleasant hours. But I believe every saloon passenger going out for the first time was an invalid, with the exception of my friend R, who was in what one of the invalids called "disgusting" health.

We reached Funchal in the Island of Madeira on the morning of the 31st. Madeira is bathed in perpetual spring. The mean winter temperature is 60° 6 Fahr., and it has a rainfall of 20 inches in 88 days. A climate like this would seem to be the very spot for people with weak chests. Unfortunately experience proves the contrary. Twenty patients were sent there from the Brompton Hospital in 1865, and of these only three derived benefit. One died and the rest returned home worse than when they went out.*

The reason for Madeira being in bad odour as a health resort is not far to seek. Years ago the doctors had a theory that a warm and moist atmosphere had a soothing and beneficial effect in cases of lung disease. Patients were then sent to Pau and Madeira in quantities. Somehow the facts did not correspond to the theory, and now there is a decided revulsion in favour of dry climates, the drier the better. In fact the modern climatical treatment of consumption may be summed up principally in the words—dryness and elevation above sea level. I have discussed the subject at greater length in the invalid's chapter at the end of the book, to which I must refer any reader who is especially interested in the matter.

We did not go on shore, but we had a very fair view of the town from the steamer. Some of our fellow passengers who landed brought back a poor report of the place. It belongs to the Portuguese,

* See "The Influence of Climate on Pulmonary Consumption," by Dr. C. T. Williams, p. 81.

and, in accordance with their usual practice, they have done their best to spoil it. Viewed from the deck of the steamer, the scene was very charming, and reminded me strongly of the Italian Riviera. The houses come down to the water's edge, and gradually thin off as they mount the hills, which rise abruptly from the beach to far above the town. The buildings are mostly white, with tiled roofs, and shine vividly against a background of emerald foliage. The blue sky above and the blue sea below form a fitting frame for the view. In the foreground is a picturesque mediæval castle, with Moorish battlements, perched on an isolated rock, which balances the picture.

We were not long allowed to enjoy the scene in quiet. The deck was soon crowded with vociferous vendors of fruit, baskets, wickerwork chairs, and curiosities of various kinds. The fruit was superb, and we were delighted to be able to purchase mangoes, bananas, and custard apples. Around the ship were innumerable crowds of boats filled with men and boys yelling as if they had been let loose from Pandemonium. Some of the passengers amused themselves by throwing sixpences in the water, which the boys eagerly dived for. Below the vessel I noticed shoals of fishes, and the water was so clear that I could see their upturned eyes. Overhead were flocks of birds on the look out for scraps. All—birds aerial, men terrestrial, boys amphibious, and fish aquatic—were intent on plunder. The vendors of the curiosities asked most outrageous prices, and then took less than

half what they asked. I saw an inlaid desk sold for nine shillings and sixpence for which thirty shillings was demanded at the commencement. I paid four shillings for a chair for which the dealer wanted seven.

We were detained longer than usual by some of the steerage passengers who got dead drunk, and had to be hauled on board like logs of wood. They were young men on their way to join the Cape Mounted Police. Some of them had never been on horseback or fired a rifle. After we reached Capetown, I saw a paragraph in one of the papers, describing a mounted policeman in action. He was represented as riding furiously *away* from the Kaffirs, his face deadly pale, both hands grasping the pommel of the saddle, and his hat and accoutrements flung to the right and left. The recruits must have been splendid targets, and if the Kaffirs had only had the good sense to have used assegais, instead of old trade guns which they hardly knew how to fire, there would have been great slaughter of the Mounted Police during the war. It is only fair to say that my remarks are not intended to apply to the whole of the Mounted Police. There were many gentlemanly and gallant men among them who held their own bravely during the war.

We sighted the Peak of Teneriffe the day after leaving Madeira. It is reported to be 8,000 feet above the level of the sea. It rises abruptly from the water, and looks higher. We steamed between it and Las Palmas, another island of the Canary group. The channel between was not wide, and the

sea was smooth and pleasant. It was almost like floating on a broad river between mountainous banks. The air was soft and balmy to a degree. The passengers had got over the effects of the Bay of Biscay, and were in the greatest good humour. The most pleasant part of the voyage to the Cape is in the neighbourhood of Madeira and the Canaries. On the other side of the Equator, the south-east trade winds are apt to blow unpleasantly strong. Here everything was peace, and we floated along in a lotos-like dream. Unfortunately things were too pleasant to last. In a day or two the air became hot and muggy. The minimum temperature at night went up to 80°, and it became too warm to sleep with comfort. Shortly after we left Madeira various plans had been propounded for breaking the sameness of ship life. Hints had been given of concerts and theatricals to come. These projects all gave way before the languor induced by the oppressive heat. No one could be enlisted on the side of action, and little else was done but eating, sleeping, and gazing in a lazy fashion at the flying fish, who, I think, got to be mentally rated as fools for exerting themselves. A little feeble interest was manifested at mid-day when the run was announced, along with the name of the winner of the daily sweepstakes dependent on the distance covered.

We crossed the line on Sunday, the 11th. The occasion was not marked in any particular way. Dire threats had been held out to us novices of baptismal services by Father Neptune, but we were too languid to heed them.

On the other side of the Equator we fell in with the trade winds. They blew in our teeth, and, though they impeded our progress, they were at first welcomed with rejoicings, on account of their coolness. The nearer we got to the Cape the more they grew in strength, and at length they became both cold and unpleasant. I caught cold, and was not at all well during the latter half of the voyage.

On board the steamer I first discovered the bad feeling—afterwards illustrated in a thousand ways—between the eastern and western provinces of the colony. We had colonists from both provinces with us, though the representatives of Port Elizabeth and the eastern provinces were in a considerable minority. In the smoking room, on the deck, over the table, nay almost in the very cabins, we could hear the war of words going on. Port Elizabeth accused Capetown of being quite out of the way, situated at one end of the colony, and separated from the greater part of it by the Great Karroo desert. Capetown retorted by pointing to its docks and its railways. Port Elizabeth said Capetown smelt—not altogether an unfounded accusation. Capetown replied that Port Elizabeth was blown almost out of existence by south-easters. Capetown being in the majority was able generally to carry the point by sheer weight of metal. We were somewhat misled by numbers, and were doubtful whether we had done right in making Algoa Bay our starting point. We were brought to a decision in favour of Capetown by the kind offer of a Cape gentleman to assist us in making arrangements for going up country, and by

an invitation which S, the Engineer, gave me to spend a little time with him on the Karroo. Both these gentlemen were so good natured and such pleasant companions, that we felt convinced the route they recommended must be the right one. I may say that as far as they went we never had reason to regret the change in our arrangements; and though it is not a route I could well advise anyone else to take, it enabled me to make many pleasant acquaintances, and to get a fair impression of a part of the colony not much visited.

About half-past four in the morning of Monday, the 19th November, I was awakened from sleep by the stopping of the throb, throb of the screw which had been our lullaby for so many nights. I got up and looked out of the porthole. A dark mass was visible looming through the dimness of the early morning, which could only be a mountain. I hurried on deck and found we were at length in Table Bay. We were out at anchor waiting for the tide to allow us to enter the docks. In front of us lay the huge bulk of Table Mountain, like a mighty flat-topped wall. At either end were two independent peaks, forming buttresses worthy of the central mass. The one on the left hand I found was the Devil's Peak, the other nearest the sea was the Lion. It is so called from its likeness to a lion couchant. The head of the lion overlooks the entrance of the bay, and is crowned by a signal station. The back slopes in a graceful curve towards Table Mountain. Between the central hill and its outlier there is a depression called *the* Kloof *par excellence*, up which

a most picturesque drive runs. The wall of Table Mountain is slightly concave, and within its bosom lie the houses and square streets of Capetown, backed by a surrounding of pines which run upwards in diminishing numbers towards the steep precipitous face of the mountain. The two buttresses form the two sides of the amphitheatre, and in the foreground are the blue waters of the Bay. Beyond the Lion's Peak is a low flat isthmus lying between Table Bay and False Bay, covered with bush and scrub. Round and at the back of the mountain are the beautifully wooded suburbs of Rondebosch and Wynberg and the vineyards of Constantia; while beyond the flat, the Blaauwberg Mountains rise in a broken sky line. At the back of the spectator are sand hills, and beyond them more mountains in the distance. On the right the entrance to the Bay appears almost blocked up by Robben Island, which is at once a hospital for lepers and a prison for rebel Kaffir Chiefs. A sky of intense blue appeared overhead, and the air was so clear that we could plainly discern the indentations, or kloofs as they are called, in the sides of the distant mountains. Altogether the scene was one to be treasured in the memory, and fully justified the half shy encomiums of the Cape passengers who seemed dubious about praising anything colonial after having been in England.

We had to remain in the Bay till nearly mid-day, the tide being against us. In the interval of waiting, and after I had gazed my fill at the panorama before me, I amused myself by watching the sea birds fishing. The Bay is crowded with them, and they

fly and swim between and about the shipping in a most unconcerned manner. I could see them hovering in the air peering with all their might into the water below. Then came a dash, a deluge of spray like that caused by a cannon shot, and in a few minutes the bird quietly emerged with the reward of its energy in its beak in the shape of a fish.

On leaving the ship we had to experience a most unpleasant scrutiny at the Custom House. The duties on goods imported into the colony form the chief source of its revenue, and the officials are consequently very strict. Strictness does not, however, excuse rudeness, and I cannot recommend the officialism of the Excise officers as worthy of imitation. They were more severe and more needlessly fussy than the officials of any customs I have seen; and I have been through many on the Continent and at home.

Capetown loses much of its fascination on a closer acquaintance. The houses present an unfinished appearance, and the town has a somewhat dirty and neglected look. The main street, which is called Adderley-street, after a former colonial minister, is a fine open street and contains some good buildings. The square flat-roofed buildings, however, which one sees in other parts of the town, and which indicate the pressure of Dutch influence, cannot be called handsome by any stretch of the imagination. Government House is a mean erection quite unworthy of the representative of Her Majesty. The finest building in the place is the Public Library and Museum.

The slovenliness which is seen in the arrangements of the streets extends to the interior of the hotels. There is not a good hotel in the place. The Royal, which claims to be the best, would compare very badly with a moderate-sized country inn at home. Our own hotel, the Masonic, was very dingy and dirty, and the bedrooms were plentifully stocked with insects. At another hotel I saw cockroaches nearly an inch long running across the floor upstairs. The great advantage of the Masonic was a raised stoep (pr. stoop) or platform in front of the house, which made a capital point of view from which to inspect the crowds of people passing below. Even this had its drawbacks. I soon found by nasal experience there was a small open cesspool just below the stoep, and the smell during the warm weather which prevailed after our landing was not agreeable. Sir Bartle Frere, the Governor, had been giving the City officials a sound scolding for their defective sanitary arrangements, and I can testify they deserved it. It is only the purity of the atmosphere which prevents a pestilence.

The hotel system in South Africa has most of the disadvantages of the American one without its advantages. There are fixed times for meals, and, up country, it is almost impossible to get anything served out of the regular hours. The landlord is always an important individual, and takes care to let you see that you are the obliged person and not he. The rooms are generally bad, with the exception of the bar, in which seems to be concentrated all the resources of the house. The bar is an

institution in South Africa. A "tot" or drink is an indispensable preliminary to meals. In summer it is "long," in winter "short." At all meals tea is generally served up—a curious cross between the American habit of drinking water and the English one of taking wine. Another peculiarity of meals at Cape inns, or hotels as they call themselves, is the appearance of curry at dinner. It is as inevitable as the *poulet roti* of Continental *table d'hôtes*. The habit of taking curry has been probably introduced by old Indian officers, who used at one time to make use of the Cape as a sanitarium. Another custom of hotel life in which there is great similarity to America is that of paying an inclusive charge per diem for meals and bed. The charges in Capetown varied from 10s. 6d. to 12s. 6d. per day, which was expected to be paid whether meals were taken in the hotel or not.

It was very hot for two or three days after we landed. On the following day the thermometer marked 101° Fahr. in the shade. I had a walk before breakfast and found the sun warm even at seven o'clock. I strolled round to the market-place and bought some oranges. They were different to what we usually get at home, having thick skins and being juicy beyond description. On taking off the skins the oranges fell into pieces almost without division. Truly one must get away from England to know what fruit really is. There were also strawberries and peaches and other fruits of which I did not then know the name.

The middle of the day, while I was at the Masonic

Hotel, was generally spent on the stoep observing the ever varying groups of passers by. Until the novelty wore off their appearance and costume formed a constant source of occupation. Hottentots, Malays, Hindoos, Kaffirs, Negroes from Mozambique and Saint Helena, Half-breds, Dutchmen, Germans and English jostled one another in picturesque confusion. The cleanest and best looking among the colonial coloured races were the Malays. They were brought over by the Dutch from Batavia in the ante-English days. Since the abolition of slavery they have multiplied and thriven. The men do most of the driving and coaching work of Capetown, and the women are generally employed as washer-women. The latter dress in gaily-coloured costumes with a superabundance of skirting, which makes them look as if they were wearing crinoline. They cover their heads and necks with brilliant handkerchiefs. All the primitive colours are to be seen, but so tastefully disposed that they do not offend the eye. The men wear short jackets, broad flowing trousers, and large straw hats with a conical shaped roof, if I may use the expression. Many of them have European boots, but the majority still retain the native wooden patten, which is merely a thick sole kept on by means of a small peg held between two of the toes. Some of the Malays are dressed in flowing Eastern robes and turbans; but I understood that this dress was only permitted to those who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca or who performed some spiritual function. They are all Mohammedans, and have their own mosques and

cemeteries, the latter being kept in a most untidy and disgraceful condition.

The other nations were mostly dressed in tattered and dilapidated European garments. It is very rare now to see natives in their proper dress, or rather undress, in the streets of the town. One day I came across a number of Kaffirs belonging to the Gaika tribe, who had just landed from King Williamstown. They were in their native dress, and fine strapping fellows they seemed to be. They had been sent to the Cape Government by Sandili, the Gaika chief, to work on the railway in course of construction from Capetown to Beaufort West. They were intended as an earnest of his promise to remain neutral—a promise which he belied two or three weeks later by breaking into open war, to the disgust of some of the Capetown papers which had been laughing at the notion of his uprising as a mere result of panic on the part of the inhabitants of the Eastern portion of the colony.

Among the whites the most remarkable were the Dutch Boers and the German Jews. The Dutchmen who are seen in Capetown come from the western side of the Great Karroo and are better off and more civilised than their brethren further up country. They are almost without exception men of large stature. A Boer six feet high is by no means a rarity, and his breadth usually corresponds to his height. Capetown is much more amicably inclined to the Boers than Port Elizabeth. At present its trade is practically limited by the Karroo, and the country between is principally occupied by Dutch

settlements. In fact the town is itself very Dutch. Many of the leading families are Dutch or descendants of Dutch. Its sympathies are consequently rather African than English. In political matters it leans towards the "patrioten," as they proudly term themselves, whose motto is "Africa for the Africander;" Africander being the term for a person born in the colony. And yet with this strong tinge of colonial sentiment, it is astonishing how even Capetown people are anxious to show they have English blood in their veins. Many people will be grossly insulted if they are called Africanders. "My father or my mother was English," they will say: and it is necessary to be very careful before fixing a person with Dutch descent. The leaven of Dutch blood shows itself in the proceedings of the people of Capetown. They are more tenacious of the petty privileges of social rank, and more conservative than the people of Port Elizabeth. In the latter place a Dutchman is a comparative rarity—a person to be traded with and then politely shown away. The English sentiment is universally dominant. English ideas are eagerly caught up and ostentatiously paraded. It is a more restless and a more enterprising place, and if it had only a decent harbour I believe it would rapidly forge ahead of Capetown. I found travellers from Port Elizabeth houses at the diamond fields and in the Free States, but none from Capetown. Not but that there are enterprising firms in the latter place; but taking things all round, it is indubitable that Capetown has somewhat lagged behind in the race of progress. The capital

of a large colony, and the chief town of a district which has been settled for more than 200 years, ought to show a larger population than 35,000.

The German Jews are also a feature. They have been attracted to South Africa by the discovery of the diamond fields. No doubt there are some very reputable persons among them, but I found they were, as a race, very unpopular. They do a considerable portion of the financing and peddlering of the country. They are spread over the greater part of the colony except Namaqua Land. There, in consequence of a trick played upon one of the miners, I was told no German Jew dare show himself. The place to see them in all their glory is the diamond fields, where they come out in most resplendent costume.

During my stay in Capetown I visited the Public Museum and Library several times. The two institutions occupy the respective wings of the same building. The Museum is chiefly remarkable for its collection of South African birds and butterflies. The collection of birds was made by Mr. Layard, who was formerly the curator, and whose work on the "Birds of South Africa" is now passing through a second edition. There were some stuffed beasts also in the Museum, but their condition can only be described as unhappy. The Library is open for reference purposes to all comers; and subscribers are allowed to take away books under certain conditions. It comprises a very valuable collection of rare books presented by Sir George Grey when he was Governor.

In front of the Museum and Library building are the Botanic Gardens. They are pretty for their size, but very small. They are only open to subscribers, but in accordance with the hospitable customs of the colony, visitors from England are admitted at any time. There is a varied collection of tropical and subtropical trees and shrubs growing in the open air, and a small collection of European plants under cover and jealously protected—an odd reversal of what I have been accustomed to see at home.

On the third day of our stay, we had a south-easter. Table Mountain was covered with a dense cloud, the so-called "table cloth." The cloud itself was stationary, but the particles composing it were propelled at a furious rate by the wind over the top of the Mountain as far as a certain point down its side, where they became dissipated. The wind, after assisting in laying the "table cloth," came down the gullies of the mountain into the town in furious blasts. Progression through the streets was painful, and dust and small stones filled eyes and nose and mouth. Capetown is very subject to south-easters, and the prevalence of these winds renders it an undesirable place for people with lung diseases. The winds are concentrated in the town by the peculiar conformation of the sides of Table Mountain. It often happens that Capetown itself is almost unbearable from a wind blowing in this direction, while on the other side of the Mountain there is hardly more than a gentle breeze.

At the end of the week, I determined to move to

Wynberg, so as to get away from the smells and winds of Capetown until our arrangements for going up country could be completed. R kindly undertook to remain and look after everything, and I was glad for him to do so. Wynberg is on the opposite side of Table Mountain. A line of railway runs from Capetown to it, passing through the suburban villages of Claremont and Rondebosch. After leaving the immediate environs of Capetown, which are not particularly beautiful, the railway passes through some very pretty wooded scenery on its way to Wynberg. Rondebosch is a peculiarly charming village, embosomed amid luxuriant vegetation, partly native and partly European. A peculiar feature of the native vegetation is the abundance of aloes and prickly pears. Alone, they give a forbidding look to the landscape, but when mixed with other trees and shrubs they do not appear out of harmony with their surroundings.

Wynberg is a scattered village, built partly on the flats at the back of Table Mountain and partly on the outlying flanks of the Mountain. The houses are dotted in and out among the trees. They are mostly one storied, stuccoed and whitewashed, and covered with a thatched roof. They usually have a covered stoep, or verandah, in front, which forms a pleasant retreat from the mid-day sun. Wynberg and Rondebosch are inhabited by the merchants and principal men of Capetown, and the villas there command high rents. I stayed at Cogill's Hotel. It is pleasantly situated near the station in the midst of a forest of pine trees, and well sheltered

from wind. It was cleaner and better than any of the Capetown hotels, and the food was good. There were several invalids from England staying there and at a boarding house in its immediate vicinity. Some of them had done fairly well, but there were no striking cases of recovery such as I afterwards met with up country. A friend of mine, with a weak chest, who wintered there a year or two ago, was no better for it. On the whole, I should be inclined to rate Wynberg with the ordinary health resorts on the Riviera, but no higher.

One of the advantages which Wynberg possesses over Capetown, in addition to its rural situation, is the superior equability of its climate. In the summer, while I was there, it was often five or six degrees cooler than the town; and I was assured that in the winter it was warmer. As regards dryness, I think Capetown would probably bear the palm. I made a few wet and dry bulb observations while at Wynberg, and I found the moisture in the air there to be pretty much on an average with south coast seaside places in England. The rainfall is higher than in Capetown, being 39 inches per annum as against a mean of 24 inches at the latter place. I do not, however, attach much value to rainfall alone. Places having a heavy annual fall are often drier than other places with much less annual downpour. In selecting a place of residence for a consumptive patient, much more depends on the nature of the soil, the number of days on which rain falls, and, above all, the amount of moisture in the air. The latter condition can only be noted by hygrometrical observa-

tions extending over a considerable period of time. I carried a portable wet and dry bulb thermometer with me, but the few observations I made were for the gratification of my curiosity, and not for any scientific purpose. The observations in the appendix are more accurate.

Shortly after I took up my abode at Cogill's, I had a drive to Kalk Bay, in company with Mr. R, the Cape gentleman whose acquaintance I made on board the steamer. Kalk Bay is a small inlet in False Bay, which is itself a large bay formed on one side by a continuation of the Table Mountain range. The village of Kalk Bay is called the Cape "Brighton." It is really a higgledy-piggledy collection of rather mean looking houses, to which Capetown people resort in summer for the purpose of sea bathing and fresh air. A little further on, and still within False Bay, is Simon's Bay, at which the English Government have a naval station. The first part of the drive was through trees, and afterwards over low flats covered with sugar bush. The road was a macadamised one, and consequently a novelty in Cape Colony. At the edge of the trees we passed another hotel called Rathfelder's, which is well spoken of as a place of residence. The railway to Wynberg is being pushed onwards to Simon's Bay, but at the usual rate of progress in the colony it is likely to take some time to become an accomplished fact.

I also visited Mr. Cloete's vineyard at Groot Constantia. Groot Constantia was planted in the seventeenth century by Simon Van der Stell, one of

the Governors under the Dutch East India Company. It has been in possession of the Cloete family since 1778. The vineyard usually visited by strangers is of a later date, and belongs to a different proprietor. Groot Constantia is situated on the slopes of the mountains some three or four miles beyond Wynberg. The road runs through picturesque snatches of wood and bush, affording peeps across the flats towards the Blaauwberg Mountains. I had the advantage of a previous acquaintance with a member of the family, and experienced a hospitable reception. The family mansion is a quaint old building, with a high peaked roof, and an ornamental gable over the entrance door, very much resembling an old French *château.* It stands on a terrace, which is planted with magnificent trees. The old Dutch Governors seem to have had a passion for tree planting, just as the modern Dutch appear to have for cutting them down. The offices and cellars lie in the rear of the house. I tasted several wines, and was pressed to taste more, but had to cry "Hold, enough," before the list was got through. Cape wines contain more alcohol than the light wines of France and Germany, and cannot be drunk with the same impunity. It is difficult to understand the unpopularity of these wines in England. I suppose it is mainly traditional, dating from the days when they were imported in a raw condition, and sold under the names of sherry and hock. Some of the wines I tried were exceedingly good, having a strong but not disagreeable flavour of their own, which, whatever else

it might be, was certainly neither that of hock or sherry. Mr. Cloete informed me he was endeavouring to introduce them by their proper appellations again into the English market, and if they are sold for their own merits, I have no doubt they will make way with the British public. At present Cape growers are somewhat handicapped by the home duties on wine. Cape wines have naturally a good deal of alcohol, and it is necessary to add more to enable them to stand the journey across the equator. Consequently they are beyond the limits of strength under which French and German wines are admitted, and are subject to a duty of half-a-crown a gallon as against the shilling duty which the lighter Continental wines pay. The extra duty is a sore subject with the colonial wine growers, and it has no doubt crippled their trade. Strong representations have been made to the Home Government, which may perhaps lead to some result, especially as Spain and Portugal are moving in the same direction.

There were some tame ostriches at the farm. They had just had the wing feathers taken off, and they looked odd as they stalked about with the cut ends rattling against their sides. They were very ambitious to investigate the contents of our pockets.

On the way back I made a short cut by a road across the sugar bush. I was with a friend, in a little phæton lent by Mr. Cogill, and we found much difficulty in getting the horse along in consequence of the growth of vegetation down the middle of the road. I attributed it at the time to the road not

having been much used. I soon, however, found out the real reason. Outside the towns in South Africa a single horse in harness is a rarity. Everybody drives a pair or multiples of a pair. The result is that the centre of the road is not trodden upon, and weeds spring up in it without interference. Instead of a Cape road being a beaten track with two ruts on either side, it is ruts minus track. Another peculiarity about Cape driving is the way the horses are harnessed. Collars are almost unknown, being only seen in connection with harness imported from England. Nearly all the horses pull by means of a breastband, which is prevented from slipping down by a cross strap over the shoulders. The whole of the harness is connected together. All that is necessary to do on outspanning, or taking the horses out, is to loosen the traces and the tail, and then the whole harness comes over the head *en masse* without difficulty. At first sight colonial horses seem to be too lightly equipped, but experience shows that their light harness answers better, and is less distressing to the animals than the more cumbrous and costly English fashion.

While I was at Wynberg I met Mr. Burgers, the ex-President of the extinct South African Republic, better known as the Transvaal. There was some angry correspondence going on in the papers with reference to a pension which he was supposed to have accepted from the British Government for giving up his country. Mr. Burgers denied the allegation point blank, and I found the rumour did



MODDER RIVER, "UP."



MODDER RIVER, TWENTY HOURS AFTER, "DOWN."

not obtain much credence except among the most extreme of the "patriots," who were only too ready to find some scapegoat. It was generally accepted that, however much the ex-President had erred in other points, dishonesty had not been one of his traits.

During my sojourn at Cogill's I went over to Capetown several times to ascertain how the arrangements were progressing for our journey up country. We found it would take some time to construct a four-horse waggon such as we required to carry us and our baggage. At one time we thought of taking two carts, but the inconveniences of such a course were obvious, and we gave up the idea. Foiled in our attempts, we reverted to our previous notion of starting from Port Elizabeth, and I spent one morning in an endeavour to get some information about the coaches from there to Bloemfontein. I called at every office or store where it was likely I could find out something, but all in vain. Port Elizabeth might well have been on the other side of the globe. It was the old story. Capetown had no dealings with Algoa Bay. At last I bethought myself of telegraphing to Port Elizabeth, and learnt in reply that the coaches travelled for six consecutive days, covering between sixty and seventy miles a day over rough roads. Notwithstanding my weak state of health I was making up my mind to try the journey, when we learnt there was a six-horse waggon for sale which had been made for a gentleman in Capetown, but which he might be willing to let us have for a consideration. R, who was anxious to get some

shooting on his way up, and was therefore not at all in love with the idea of travelling by coach, came over to Wynberg post haste to consult me about the propriety of taking advantage of the opportunity. I was as anxious as he was to get up country, and we went to see the gentleman for whom the waggon was being made. For a consideration he promised to let us have it. He also expressed himself willing to purchase horses for us also, of course for a proper consideration. After a short consultation we agreed to buy the waggon and to pay him a commission for procuring horses for us.

Having thus settled our mode of travelling to Bloemfontein, I determined to get away from the sea shore as quickly as possible. I wrote to Mr. S to inform him that I proposed taking advantage of his invitation to visit him. I received a reply in a few days from him saying he should be glad to see me, and giving me instructions and introductions to facilitate my journey, and I therefore returned to Capetown and commenced making my preparations. My friend R, who was energy itself, kindly undertook all the arrangements with respect to the waggon, which it was arranged he should bring up to Mr. S's place as soon as it was ready. Meantime we engaged two "boys," one to drive and the other to act as lieutenant. The driver, whose name was Jacob, knew his business thoroughly, and if it had not been that he was occasionally given to a too fervent devotion to the brandy bottle, he would have been perfect as a servant. He was a short, fat, thick-set man, a half-breed. His lieutenant was named

"Larney." I render the name phonetically. Larney was a Malay, and, of course, a Mussulman. Followers of the Prophet are at a premium in a country where drinking is almost universal amongst the natives. Larney would never touch either wine or spirits, though he took very kindly to Bass. Fortunately Bass is dear in Cape Colony, and we could therefore rely on Larney's discertion. For the rest, he was a fair cook, and a most excellent liar. We paid heavy wages for South Africa. Jacob got six shillings a day and Larney five. Subsequent experience convinced me that it is false economy to lose a good servant for the sake of two or three shillings a day. The comfort of a trip depends almost entirely on the boys.

It is necessary to explain that in South Africa the term "boys" does not mean a male person of tender years. Every native is a boy. No one will acknowledge a coloured man to be a man. An Africander would stare with astonishment if he were asked where his *man* was. Theoretically in Cape Colony the black man is the equal of the white. By virtue of a constitution, which was almost thrust upon the country by the Home Government, he has the privilege of voting. Practically, in his own eyes, as well as in those of the English, he is a being of very inferior situation. He may not enter a white man's hotel except on the business of a white man. In the neighbourhood of Capetown he worships side by side with his white brother, but up country it would be unheard of presumption for him to enter a white church or chapel. He is a servant and he accepts his position. A white man is always "baas"—

(*pr.* boss)—the Dutch for master. In the Free State a Boer thinks nothing of getting off his horse and thrashing a black man because he has not taken off his hat to him. Generally speaking the Boers will not allow the natives even to be boys. They are "schelms," *i.e.*, rascals—the term applies to awkward oxen.

We took horses to run in the waggon. They cost more to feed than mules, but they are more amenable to discipline. We had every reason subsequently to be glad that we had not followed the advice of one or two of our ready counsellors, and taken mules. I do not know what they may be in America, but in South Africa they are the most perverse and unsatisfactory beasts of burden in existence. Their only recommendation is that they are less expensive than horses, and less liable to diseases. In every other respect they are most objectionable.

While at Capetown the second time I drove over the "kloof," or cleft between the Lion and Table Mountain. R and some other friends walked it, which is undoubtedly the proper way of enjoying its beauties. Owing, however, to my physical incapability I was compelled to drive, and I accordingly "did" it in that most prosaic vehicle, a hansom. There are several hansoms in Capetown, the only difference between them and the English ones being that they are built on the model of the north country hansoms, and are consequently roomier and better than London ones, and that the roofs are white instead of black. They are driven principally by Malays.

I went *viâ* Sea Point. The road runs round the "rump" of the Lion. Sea Point is a pretty suburban watering place, lying just where one might suppose the tail of the lion to be curled round. A tramway runs from it to Capetown, and such of the Capetown people as wish to enjoy the full influences of the Atlantic sea breezes live out there. After leaving Sea Point the road ascends up a *col* between the Lion's head and Table Mountain by zigzags. It reminded me, both by the character of the vegetation on either side, and by the peeps it afforded of sea and coast, of the Corniche Road. In the distance was the same blue sky and blue sea, while near at hand the vivid green shrubs and low trees brought the Riviera strongly to my mind. The view from the top did not belie the description which had been given me. Below lay Capetown, its straight streets and square blocks of buildings showing like the squares of a draft board. Near at hand were fine forests of pine trees gradually dwindling off as they approached the tremendous precipices of Table Mountain, which appeared quite close on the right hand. On the other side were the more gentle slopes of the Lion. Beyond Capetown was the Bay. From this point of view it might have been a circular pool, the chops of the harbour being hidden by the Lion's rump. To the right of Table Mountain was the triangular shaped Devil's Peak, and beyond, the flats bounded in the hazy distance by the cloud-like and broken summits of the Blaauwberg.

The descent lies through trees, and affords picturesque peeps of the scenery below. On the way

down I met my friends who were toiling up the hot slopes. The drive occupied about two hours, and the walk not much more.

On Tuesday, the 18th December, I started on my journey to S's, in company with a fellow passenger who had just been appointed to a medical appointment in the eastern province, and who had a few days to spare before starting for his billet. He arranged to accompany me as far as Worcester.

Dr. C was an example of the advantages which emigration affords to a young medical man. He suffered from bronchitis, which prevented him from living in comfort at home. He accordingly determined to emigrate to one of the colonies; and hearing that there were several openings in Cape Colony for medical men, he came there. His expectations were not without foundation, for before he had been in the country three weeks he had the choice of three different appointments, in respect of all of which a certain minimum income was guaranteed by the inhabitants. He chose one in the Fingo country, where he was offered an income which a young English medical man of general practice could hardly have realised till after some years of hard labour.

We took an afternoon train to Wellington. The line joined company with the Wynberg railway as far as Salt River, where it struck off towards the Blaauwberg. The country, up to the base of the mountains, was flat and covered with brush. The patches of cultivation were few and far between. We passed a herd of about a hundred ostriches

feeding on the grass, under the charge of a black "boy." The birds did not appear at all moved by the appearance of the train, but gazed with all the calmness of educated *nonchalance* upon the smoking monster. As we approached the mountains the line began to rise. We crossed a low pass at a height of about a thousand feet, and descended on the other side upon the village of Paarl. Paarl is a great wine-making and coach-building place. It is inhabited almost exclusively by Dutchmen. It is nestled among trees and vineyards at the base of a long hill, and its white houses looked quite arcadic in their framework of green. Paarl—or "the pearl"—is a quiet unprogressive, happy, sleepy hollow, being in fact the sort of place to which all good Boers might hope to go.

Wellington is in the same valley, a short distance from Paarl. The station is a little way from the village, and we had to take a Cape cart to our destination. We spent the night at "Van Henten's," a decent hotel as hotels go in the colony. While waiting for dinner, we had a stroll round the village. It is of comparatively recent date, having risen into notice since the construction of the great road into the interior through Bains' Kloof. It seemed a fruitful place. I noticed bananas, maize, peaches, and many other fruit trees. There was the usual array of dogs. Dogs flourish all over the colony. On arrival at a farmhouse, eight or ten dogs will spring forth as if they were going to devour the stranger seeking hospitality. Fortunately they are

very mongrel in their breed, and the least display of a whip causes them to vanish with great celerity. A remarkable fact in connection with dogs throughout the country is that hydrophobia is entirely unknown, though European dogs are largely imported.

In the morning we drove over Bains' Kloof. The railway goes further up the valley, and follows an easier pass. The road over Bains' Kloof is more direct, and intersects the railway again, as it bends round towards Worcester, at a little road-side station called Breede River. The road is a splendid piece of engineering. Until the railway was made it was almost the only means of access to the districts beyond. Before the road was constructed the difficulties of the pass were fearful. The Boers had to take their waggons to bits and let them down piecemeal over the precipices. The construction of the road was a great blessing, and the making of it was thought a wonderful feat. Now it is superseded in its turn by the railway. We drove over it in a Cape cart with two horses. They were sorry looking brutes, but proved to have more go in them than their appearance warranted. In consequence of the railway being now the main route for traffic, the road has been allowed to fall a little into disrepair. It abounded in small depressions and elevations, which caused our cart to rock about in a manner somewhat alarming to my nerves, which were not yet accustomed to Cape roads. It is, however, really well constructed, and with a little attention might be made as good as any Swiss road. We went up

most of the way at a jog trot, a thing which would have been deemed an impossibility in Switzerland. There were two boys, our two selves, and our joint luggage, so that the horses had no light weight to pull. Cape horses have a wonderful amount of endurance. They will go through work which would knock an English horse up in three days, and they will live meanwhile on fare on which our pampered animals would starve.

The scenery amply justified our drive. It is of a different character on either side of the pass. On the Wellington side the road zigzags up a slope, and the views of the plains below and the mountains around outshine the scenery of the pass itself. On the Breede River side the road runs down a narrow, twisting valley, which affords delicious little peeps up and down. The attractions on this side lie in the valley and not in any distant prospect. There are no actual precipices on the Wellington side, but several steep slopes, which would prove quite as efficacious in case of an upset. The slopes were covered with grass till near the top, where it gave way to a medley of loose stones piled irregularly all around in picturesque confusion. The road wound round a sort of three-cornered hole, at the bottom of which was a celebrated orange farm known as Retiefs. The rocks are frequented by hordes of baboons, who are sad thieves of Mr. Retief's fruit. We kept a sharp look out in the hope of seeing some, but we were disappointed. There was a little inn—I beg its pardon, hotel—at the top of the pass. It was situated in the midst of

a scene of desolation not unlike the surroundings of the St. Bernard Hospice, minus its lake. The view towards the south-west was very picturesque. It afforded a view of the Paarl valley with the white houses of Wellington just visible in the distance on the left. In front was a conical grass hill known as the Krooberg. Beyond it were more valleys and more hills, fading away into blue indistinctness. Behind and around were the sombre melancholy rocks forming the summit of the pass. The hotel had mud floors, the first I had hitherto come across. We outspanned at it for an hour, and then proceeded on our way downwards. The first two miles of the descent were exceedingly pretty. The road followed the windings of a mountain stream, and at every corner there was a new view. On the way there we saw some hyraxes—small animals not unlike guinea pigs—and numerous birds. We emerged from the pass at Breede River on to the floor of the main valley on the other side of the mountains, where we again came into contact with the railway, which had in the meantime taken a long bend round. The bottom of the valley was as flat as if it had been planed level. It was covered with alluvial deposit and loose boulders and pebbles. No doubt at one time it was the bottom of a lake. There were lofty mountains on either side, and the Hex river meandered in windings among the alluvium. It reminded me strongly of the Rhine valley between Ragaz and Chur.

Breede River station looked a lonely place. The station-master told us he got £7 a month. He had

been there two months, and had already had to pay £8 for having a doctor over twice from Worcester. He said he had to have all his provisions brought either from that place or Capetown. According to his account, therefore, his place could have hardly been a paying one. By way of compensation he had next to nothing to do. We went for a stroll on the veld while waiting for the train, and almost within a stone's-throw of the station, we roused up a rhebok, which went off in a series of graceful bounds. Ultimately the train arrived, and in a short time we were at Worcester.

## CHAPTER II.

### WORCESTER TO BEAUFORT.—THE KARROO AND GOUPH.

WORCESTER is a neat little town or, rather, village. The streets are laid out in parallelograms and planted with blue gum trees. They have watercourses on either side, which intersect at the crossings. The water for the watercourses, or "spruits," as they are termed, is derived from the Hex River. The houses are mostly one storey high. The roofs are thickly thatched and have a steep pitch. In the centre is a lofty gable which has often an ornamented parapet. The walls are generally stuccoed and painted white. The houses in Worcester are representative of the better class of Dutch houses. The chief trade of the town is waggon building.

While strolling round the outskirts, I saw a little primitive agriculture. I came across some threshing floors. They were circular in shape, and were composed of mud. The corn was being thrashed on them by the ancient process of driving horses round among the loose straw. It reminded me vividly of the customs alluded to in the Pentateuch. At one of the threshing floors the chaff was being separated from the wheat by tossing both together in the wind. It was impossible to avoid seeing that the process was most wasteful and improvident. And yet it was being carried on in one of the most im-

portant towns of an English colony, which had been, to boot, for some time the terminus of a railway.

We stayed at the Masonic Hotel. There are two other inns in the place. They were both better than the Masonic, which was not comfortable.

At the Masonic Hotel I came across a young gentleman from England, who was staying there for the benefit of his lungs. He said he had done moderately well. Worcester appeared to be a much better place of resort for lung invalids than either Capetown or Wynberg. Although it is only 776 feet above sea level, it has a dry atmosphere, owing chiefly, I suppose, to its proximity to the Karroo. It has an average humidity of 54·99°. For the information of such of my readers as are not accustomed to meteorological modes of statement, I may say that these figures represent a considerable dryness. It is the custom to reduce all measurements with a dry and wet bulb, or any other hygrometer, to a scale of which 100 represents complete saturation. The value of the scale will be perhaps better appreciated when it is understood that on it 70° would be considered dry in England. The dryness of Worcester corresponds with the rainfall, which is only 11¾ inches during the year. The mean temperature is 62·88° Fahr. At present, and until the railway is extended to Beaufort, I should consider it one of the best places for a man with a weak chest within easy reach from Capetown. It is a decidedly pretty place, and good shooting is obtainable in the neighbourhood.

At Worcester I parted with Dr. C, who returned

to Capetown. I have never seen him since, but sincerely hope he has found his berth a comfortable one. Having seen him off, I cast about for ways and means of getting to the encampment of my friend S. The railway then only ran to Montagu Road, a station on the edge of the Karroo. How I was to get from there I hardly knew. I saw one of the district engineers of the railway at Worcester, and he gave such a dismal picture of the means of locomotion and accommodation on the Karroo, that I almost determined to return. Fortunately I happened to hear that Mr. P, the superintendent engineer of the railway was staying at Worcester. I introduced myself to him and stated my difficulties. He recommended me to make a push, and said I should be sure to get on "somehow." He was kind enough to give me a general letter of introduction to everybody on the line, asking them to aid me with counsel and lodging if necessary. His advice was so encouraging that I determined to make the push, and trust to good luck to get carried on. I accordingly left on the afternoon of Friday, the 21st December, for Montagu Road. In the railway carriage I met a man who turned out to be the keeper of a canteen at Jan de Boer's, a few miles further on than Montagu Road, who said he could give me a bed in his canteen.

The railway ran for a little distance along the flat floor of the Hex River valley. It then entered a defile, through which the head-waters of the river came down to the lowlands. The railway began to ascend rapidly as we went up the defile. This part

of the line was constructed by my friend S, and it is a remarkable piece of engineering. The gradients and curves were startling. At one place the line ascended fourteen miles in a practically continuous gradient of one in forty. It was curious to look upwards and see the embankment running in an opposite direction, at an elevation of several hundred feet above us, and no means visible from the carriage windows of reaching the higher level. There were only two tunnels the whole distance. The total rise was about two thousand feet. The only railways, over whichI have travelled in Europe, which have similar difficulties to overcome, are the line across the Black Forest in South Germany and the Brenner railway. Both these lines, however, abound in tunnels, and were made in the most expensive manner. The Hex Valley line cost only £10,000 per mile, which must be considered very cheap, taking into account that most of the material had to be brought from England. The remainder of the line, which traverses a more even country, has been estimated to cost £6,000 per mile. It was a narrow gauge, 3 feet 6 inches. No cuttings or other expensive works had been made where they could be avoided. The labourers on the line were mostly natives, who were earning on the average about twenty-eight shillings a month, all food being found for them. The line was being constructed by the Cape Government in districts. Each district was placed under the charge of a resident engineer, who superintended the making of the line through his district.

Shortly after getting through the second tunnel we began to descend. The mountains disappeared, and their place was taken by flat or round-topped hills. The shreds of cultivation entirely disappeared. The railway ran over undulations covered with low scrubby bush, interspersed with small irregularly shaped stones. Not the slightest vestige of a tree was visible. Above was a blue sky from which the sun shone like a ball of fire. The intense heat of its rays was denoted by the quiverings of the stratum of air lying next to the ground. There was no appearance of animal life save when a bird, frightened by the noise of the train, sprung out of some low bush. Occasionally the sand rose in small columns which whirled playfully across the plain. We almost gasped for breath in our carriage, and pulled down the blinds so as to avoid the least touch of sunshine. We had at length reached the outskirts of the *Karroo*.

The physical configuration of South Africa is peculiar. There is a great interior plateau from 3,000 to 6,000 feet in height. This plateau comprises a considerable portion of the upper part of Cape Colony, the whole of the Orange Free State and the Diamond Fields, and part of the Transvaal. The country between it and the sea is occupied by step-like terraces, one above another, with dividing mountain ranges between. The division line between the plateau and the lower level is best marked between the Free State and Natal, where the Drakensberg Mountains form an edge or lip to the great interior basin. On the

Free State side, the slope upwards is so gradual that the traveller is hardly aware he is ascending till he reaches the summit and finds an abrupt drop in front of him. On the seaward side the mountain falls down 2,000 feet almost sheer. Further south the edges of the basin are not so clearly defined, the mountain ridge being broken into several parallel chains, enclosing the before-mentioned steps or terraces, which let the country down, as it were, by degrees to sea level. The largest of these terraces is occupied by the Karroo, which lies between a range of mountains on the north, known by the successive names of the Roggeveld, Nieuwveld, and Sneeuwberg, and a second chain on the south called the Witte and Swarte Bergen (or White and Black Mountains). The word Karroo means "plenty" in the Hottentot language. There is a native tradition that at one time it was a fertile region. Even now, if irrigated its soil is capable of bearing anything. But it has next to no water, and has consequently become a desert, with a few Boer farmhouses scattered at wide intervals over it. In the eastern part, sheep thrive on the scrub which grows there, but a great part of it has no use either for man or beast. Its aspect is the most unlovely that the eye of man could possibly conceive, and it grows in repulsiveness as the traveller advances.

At Montagu Road station I learned that a material train would leave Jan de Boer's early next morning. A luggage train was just about to start there, and although I had a bed kindly offered me

at Montagu Road, I thought it better to push on. When I arrived at Jan de Boer's, I found reason to regret my determination, as my night quarters were of the roughest description. The canteen was constructed of corrugated iron sheets thrown, rather than built, together. My bedroom, which had no door, opened on to the bar, which was filled with navvies of all colours in various stages of drunkenness, who made night hideous by their songs and quarrels. Four other people got out with me from the train. Three slept in a tent outside. One took possession of a bed in my room. I slept, or rather attempted to sleep, on a truckle bed arranged on empty brandy cases, and filthy to a degree. Luckily, I always carry Keating's Insect Powder with me, and by doctoring the bed liberally with it, I managed to keep fairly free from the insect life which swarmed over the place.

In the morning I found the material train in readiness. It ran as far as a place called Maatjies Fontein. There was said to be a pick-up train from there which ran nowhere in particular, and I was told that it would probably be impossible to get a cart to go further. The guard saw my blank look when I received this encouraging information, and advised me to get off at Mr. B's, the engineer of No. 3 district, where I should certainly get a breakfast and probably also a lift forwards. The keen morning air had given me an appetite, and the mention of the breakfast decided me. I accordingly got him to stop the train for me near Mr. B's encampment.

S had given me a letter to Mr. B, but I found the mention of his name would have been enough. Mr. B and his hospitable wife at once invited me to breakfast, to which I did ample justice. After breakfast Mr. B went with me to the stables to make arrangements for my journey onwards. He found both his Cape carts were from home, and as S would very likely be down to spend Christmas-day at his place, he suggested that I should wait that day at least. As it was clearly impossible to get on, I was obliged to trespass on his hospitality a little further.

The encampment was situated in the midst of a wilderness of scrub and stone. It comprised Mr. B's house, and two others belonging to the assistant-engineer and the doctor. All were of wood with corrugated iron roofs. Between two of the houses was a room fitted up with what I never expected to see in the middle of the desert—a full-sized billiard table. Some distance from the mansion house, or rather houses, were the stables and offices. Near the former I noticed a garden with vegetables in a healthy condition, the first really green things I had observed since leaving Worcester. It appeared that when the engineers took possession of the place, there was a small pool of brack water, which had for years been the sole supply of a miserable farmhouse there, and which often failed in times of drought. Mr. B had the country inspected, and found a spring which was opened up, and which gave a permanent supply of cool and fairly good water. It was with this water that the

garden was irrigated, and the hitherto neglected soil had been found capable of supplying two crops of vegetables and green stuff annually. Long as the Boer had lived at the farmhouse, and often as he had to leave it for want of water, he had never thought of opening up the spring. That remained for strangers to do. One of the greatest benefits which the railway will confer on the arid and parched Karroo will be the opening up of its hidden treasures of water—more precious in such a country than countless stores of gold or minerals.

Finding I had nothing to occupy the time with, Mr. B invited me to accompany him down the line. We mounted the foot-plate of a miniature locomotive, and rode upon it as far as Mentjies Fontein, where we met a party of engineers on their way to spend Christmas at Mr. B's. Amongst them I was glad to see the face of my friend S. Mr. B pressed me to return and join in the festivities, and I agreed to do so.

Our return was accomplished by road. I rode back in S's cart. It was my first experience of an up-country road, and I did not enjoy it. The cart was rather an old one, and the way it oscillated from side to side on the uneven track would have made an English driver open his eyes. First we went over to the right at an angle of forty-five degrees, and then came a corresponding heave to the left, and then a jolt which lifted us some inches from our seats and brought us down again on them with unpleasant force. Every minute I clutched the sides of the cart expecting an upset, but somehow

or other the two horses managed to keep their legs. At one place the road passed over some stone steps formed by the protruding edges of lines of outcropping strata, and as we bumped down each successive level, I could not help wishing that my illness had left me with a little more flesh on my bones to moderate the violence of the bumps. I felt inclined to say with Dromio in the play, "If I last in this service you must clothe me in leather." At length, sore and shaken, we reached Pieter Mentjies Fontein as Mr. B's station was called.

I stayed Christmas-day over with the B's. On Christmas-eve we all went for a pic-nic to the foot of the Wittebergen, which lay not far from the encampment. We took carts as far as we could, and then walked across the veld to the base of the mountains. On the way I noticed one of the party jump violently backwards. He had all but put his foot upon a whip snake. These snakes are small and slender, being only as thick as the little finger. Despite their small size, they are most venomous, and a bite from one of them is almost certain death. We all commenced hunting for the snake, but it managed to get into a crevice, and we were unable to dislodge it. It is considered a sacred duty to kill a snake in South Africa, and one which everybody, black and white alike, tries to carry out. Snakes are very abundant in some parts of the colony. For the first few days after I landed, I used to have one eye on the ground and one eye on my gun as I walked among grass or scrub, and the least rustling suggested snakes. The feeling, however, soon wore

off. It is very strange how few cases of deaths by snake bites occur, especially among the natives, who go about with naked feet.

When we got to the mountains, the rest of the party began clambering up them. My deficient lung-space prevented me from following their example, and I remained at the base. After some time, finding they had disappeared from view, I strolled back alone. When I got a mile or two from them, I began to realise the solitariness of the Karroo. I could see the mountains behind and some flat-topped hills in front. Between them were miles upon miles of ugly grey stones and scrub. There was not a human being, or a habitation, or a tree in sight. Nothing could be heard except the occasional movement of a bird or lizard sheltering from the hot sun under a bush. Not a sign of anything in motion was visible, save the columns of sand chasing each other across the plain. Hot quiverings rose in the air, and in the distance appeared the half cloud-like, half water-like semblance occasioned by the mirage. It was awful to think of being lost on such a waste without water and without food. I was not at all sorry to be rejoined by the members of the pic-nic party, flushed with their warm clamber up the rocks. In the evening there was a merry gathering to celebrate the season, which we duly honoured with copious libations of Bass, and the orthodox turkey and plum-pudding. A plum-pudding in the desert! I had not bargained for such luck when I left Cape-town.

I left the hospitable wooden walls of Maatjies Fontein the day after Christmas-day in company with Mr. Be, the engineer of the next district, who was going as far as Buffels River, where his camp was fixed. S was to come on next day and take me on to Grootfontein, fifty miles from Maatjies Fontein. It was thought that such a long ride would be too much for me to cover in one day. Hence the arrangement for me to stop half way. My kind hosts were as careful of me as if I had been one of themselves, and everything was arranged for my comfort on the road with the greatest foresight and circumspection. Mr. B's cart was in better condition than S's, but the road to Mentjies Fontein had not improved. Fortunately I had taken the precaution to bring an air cushion in my baggage, and as I used it on this occasion, I suffered less from the jolting. After leaving Mentjies Fontein, the road became a little better, or rather Mr. Be made it better by driving over the veld when we came to a bad bit. The scenery was the same. As we crossed from one undulation to another nothing was visible but the dusty, hot stones and scrub, miles and miles of interminable Karroo before and behind, mountains on the one hand and flat monotonous hills on the other. The dust lay thickly on the road, and rose in clouds around us as we proceeded on our way. If we stopped for a minute or two crowds of flies found their way into the cart, and bit us with a savage rapacity of which English flies are hardly capable. Fortunately, while the cart was in motion,

we were able to keep them at bay by opening the "klap," or curtain, at the back, and allowing a breeze to circulate through.

Buffels or Buffaloes River ran in a hollow athwart the direction of our road. When I say ran, I mean that it ran perhaps once in two or three years. The Karroo rivers have deep channels, well-marked courses, and good beds, and, in fact, everything necessary to make a river except the water. At rare intervals, after rain, the dry beds are filled with raging torrents, carrying everything before them, and quite impassable for a day or two. But these intervals are so infrequent that they only serve to remind the passengers over the Karroo that there are rivers there sometimes. In their normal condition, the rivers are merely long gullies, with deep beds of sand, and occasional pools of water every few miles. These pools are the resting places for travellers, and occasionally determine the site of a farm house. A person glancing over the map of South Africa at once notices the number of places ending in "fontein," as Klipfontein, Bloemfontein or Mentjiesfontein. Fontein is Dutch for "spring." On the Karroo nearly all the water is "brack," or impregnated with saline matters, which give it a bitter taste. Even this brack water often fails for twenty or thirty miles. It is, therefore, necessary to carry "vatjies," or little water barrels, in the cart or waggon. Mr. Be had one of these slung under his cart.

The river bed was marked by mimosa bushes, which ran along its sides. Their green foliage pre-

sented an agreeable contrast to the yellow dusty scrub of the veld. They do not, however, invite a too close acquaintance, being furnished with long slender white thorns from an inch to six inches in length, which stand out at all angles ready to hook the clothes and skin of the unwary explorer. Once fairly caught, it is almost impossible to get away without leaving some relics behind. The thorns have the repute of being poisonous. Any way, it is prudent not to test their qualities.

Buffels River is the boundary between the Karroo and the Gouph (pr. Khope), which is generally classed as part of the Karroo. Gouph is another Hottentot word, signifying "rich," or "fat." The Hottentot names of the Karroo and Gouph must either have been conferred at a time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, or else were given on the "*ex luce non lucendo*" principle. The Gouph is even more desolate and forbidding than the Karroo. There is less bush, but more stones, and the stones are redder and hotter looking. Indeed, in places nothing can be seen but stones; and even they are so irregular in size and shape, and so unamenable to reasonable tools, that they are almost worthless for building purposes.

Mr. Be had been in India, and his hut was the best adapted for standing the hot weather of any of those I came across on the Karroo. The corrugated iron roof was covered thickly with bush. In the windows were "chatties," or frames of cocoa-nut fibre, down which a stream of water was kept dropping, and there was a punkah in the living

room. The result was a delicious coolness, which was very agreeable. The camp was situated among the mimosa bushes, on the banks of the so-called river, on rising ground, which afforded glimpses of distant mountains outside the eye-wearying Karroo.

I stayed with Mr. Be the greater part of the next day, as S did not arrive till late in the afternoon. He came with a party who were on their way to Grootfontein, "the metropolis" of the next district. They were travelling in a cart with four horses. It is quite a common thing at the Cape to use four horses for long journeys. I have occasionally seen six in one cart. Until the novelty wore offit looked rather curious to see such a number of horses harnessed to a two-wheeled vehicle.

S had an engagement which would detain him a little time at Buffels River; and as a two-horse cart travels slower than a four-horse one, it was arranged that I should go ahead in his cart, leaving him to follow later with the rest of the party in the other conveyance. I accordingly started in company with his Hottentot driver to Grootfontein, which was some twenty-five or thirty miles away. Though it was late in the day, the heat was great, and the flies were as eager as ever to taste my English blood until it began to get dusk, when I obtained a little respite. The dust, as usual, rose in clouds around the cart, enabling me to smell and taste the saline particles which are to make of the Karroo a blooming garden when it gets water. We ascended a long hill, which tested the muscles of the poor horses, who had been travelling

from Pieter Mentjies Fontein during the heat of the day. The roadside was ornamented with the white bleaching skeletons of horses and oxen which had perished through lack of water. Thirty miles work day after day without water is a great test of the endurance of oxen, and in dry seasons the Karroo always claims a number of victims.

I tried to get into conversation with my black friend, the driver, but as he understood no English, and I spoke no Dutch, my efforts were a failure. Soon after dusk we came on one of the most villainous bits of road I remember. Hitherto the driver, by keeping a sharp look out, had been able to avoid the biggest stones and the worst holes. But as soon as it became dark there was nothing for it but to trust to luck, and go straight on. Notwithstanding the air-cushion with which I was provided, I was shaken with most unmerciful severity. I tried several times to mitigate the violence of the collisions by standing up and gripping tight hold of the sides of the cart, but the result was an ignominious failure. Sometimes it seemed to me as if we were going down a small precipice in the dark ; sometimes we heeled over like a ship on her beam ends. Then would come a wrench, a violent rock, and a bump—the memory of those bumps dwells on my mind even now. I almost wished we might have an upset to vary the pitiless monotony with which I was tossed up and down, and backwards and forwards. It was with a deep sensation of thankfulness that I reached the encampment at Grootfontein, and was able to

dismount, painfully and carefully, from my weary seat. I found two gentlemen sitting up for the party. I announced myself, and reported that the others were behind me. They did their best to look after me, but I was dead beaten. Seeing some water I did what I had not done since I lost my health by drinking that unsafe beverage in the Dolomites. I seized the bottle and took a heavy pull. Almost immediately I learnt that one of the navvies attached to the camp had died of typhoid fever that day. Frightened at the possible consequences of again touching neat water, I immediately begged for some whiskey and swallowed a large quantity to counteract any typhoid poison that might be lurking in the water, whilst I mentally registered a vow that I would not trouble the dangerous element in its native condition a second time.

Next morning, what with whiskey, fatigue, and heat, I could eat nothing, and felt quite exhausted when we reached S's camp at Vlak Kraal (pr krawl) after a 30 miles drive.

We outspanned half way for an hour at a small inn at Bloed River. It was a very hot day, and when we arrived at the inn we found everybody had gone to bed. The floors were of mud, with the usual odoriforous mixture of cowdung plastered over it. The habit of using this sweet compound is derived from the natives, and is said to be necessary to keep off flies! At first the scent is pungent and offensive, but after a few weeks' residence in the country the nostrils get accustomed to it as they do to many other things. The house was dirty, and the furni-

ture was guiltless either of water or polish. The people looked too hot to do any cleaning.

I reached Vlak Kraal (*i.e.* Flat Kraal) on December 28th, and spent the next three weeks there. A day's rest restored my energies, and in a short time we had settled down to a routine life.

Vlak Kraal was situated on the edge of some mimosa bushes which lined the banks of a river, or rather river bed, the name of which I was unable to ascertain, but which probably ran into the Gamka River. The encampment had only just been formed, and was in a rough condition compared with those of the other engineers. S's hut was of wood, like the others, and roofed with corrugated iron. It stood on a stack of loose stones, but as yet there had been no time to make a verandah in front. Consequently, as soon as the sun got vertical, there was no shade except inside the hut. Corrugated iron possesses the property of being a splendid conductor of heat and cold, and is hot in summer and cold in winter. We used to rise early and breakfast from about seven up to half-past nine. The temperature would then be pleasant, but after that time it was a case of trying to dodge the sun's rays. I used to sit outside so long as there was the slightest vestige of shade. Inch by inch the sun advanced ; inch by inch I retired, until at last I used to be fairly compelled to beat a retreat to the inside, which towards evening became at times almost unbearably hot. Meantime S, who had gone to his office, or on an excursion on the line of the projected railway, would return for his lunch

broiled with heat. The afternoon was always devoted to a siesta. Immediately after sundown there was an adjournment outside. The evening was the most lovely and enjoyable part of the day.

We had very hot weather during my stay. Vlak Kraal lay fifteen hundred feet lower than Pieter Mentjies Fontein, and the heat was much greater. At three o'clock in the afternoon on New Year's-day the thermometer registered 104° Fahr. in the shade, and at bedtime it was 85°. During the afternoon we had a hot wind. The wind was like the breath of a furnace. It was far more trying than a cold wind would have been at home. It produced a most curious effect on my nervous system, making it feel in a high state of tension. My hair almost stood on end as if I was surcharged with electricity, and a most uncomfortable sensation of restlessness pervaded me. The wind raised the dust everywhere around, and whilst it was blowing both S and I felt most wretched. Fortunately it passed over before dusk, and we were able to enjoy a brilliant sunset which followed it. From the back of the hut we could catch glimpses of the Wettebergen, which appeared to be enveloped in a terrific storm, the *ratio existendi*, in all probability, of the wind from which we had been suffering. The sky opposite the setting sun was a deep indigo blue, flecked with orange-coloured clouds. Round the sinking sun itself were streaks of fiery gold, stretched across a horizon of pearly violet varied with purple; while to the left rose the mountains tinted with the lurid alpengluh of the storm clouds. In a few

minutes the rich tints disappeared, the gold turned grey, and as the sun dipped finally out of sight nothing was visible but heavy masses of clouds, from which blazed incessant flashes of lightning, so distant that we could only just hear the accompanying thunder, and yet vivid enough to throw a light on all our surroundings. I have seen beautiful sunsets in the Alps and on the west coast of Scotland, but I remember nothing to equal this.

The day after was cool, there being only 75° at 7 p.m. It was marked by a visit from the Doctor of No. 3 district; he came to pay a flying visit. Almost immediately after he had lett, the Boer, who lived at the farm at Vlak Kraal, sent for him. Boers are always fancying themselves ill. They live almost entirely on meat, and suffer from dyspepsia, otherwise they are a very healthy race. Those up country have need to be for, generally speaking, they find it difficult to procure medical assistance. The nearest doctor to Vlak Kraal, for instance, was at Beaufort, seventy miles away.

The farmhouse was a small, sun-dried, brick building, with a large fig tree in front. The farmer had five or six stalwart sons, who, and whose families were distributed between the farmhouse and a smaller house a little distance from it. It is quite common for three or four persons to occupy the same bedroom, and often the same bed, among the Boers. The inconveniences of such a custom are modified by the habit which prevails of sleeping in the clothes worn during the day. The chief occupation of the farmer seemed to be to count the sheep

and goats as they went out to feed in the morning, and as they returned to the kraal or inclosure (comp. the Mexican "corral") in the evening. The day was consumed in alternately sleeping and drinking coffee under the fig tree. The farm was composed of 40,000 acres, Karroo land of course.

About a week after I had been at Vlak Kraal S took me for a drive to a place called Rietfontein, fifteen miles on the Beaufort road, where he had some business to look after. The road was good, but the scenery was Gouphish to a degree. Red stones lay all over as if they had been peppered from some gigantic colander. Even the dusty and half dead brush was visible only in patches. Numerous skeletons relieved the redness of the stones, on some of which were perched ravens on the look-out for carrion. The aspect of the country was not unlike the Yorkshire moors, substituting red stones for heather, and scrub for bilberry wire. To follow out the comparison it was necessary to abstract every particle of moisture, to make the country a little more undulating, to raise the height of the distant hills, to make miles into twenty miles, to throw in plenty of skeletons to increase the desolation four-fold, and to place the whole under a furiously hot sun blazing from a deep blue sky. Those of my readers who are unable to appreciate my description may perhaps be able to form an idea of the scene from the background of Holman Hunt's picture of the "Scape Goat" to which it bore some slight resemblance. There is a little hotel at Rietfontein, at which we arrived at three in the after-

noon. Everybody was asleep, and the place was shut up. When we had roused some one, and entered the inn, we found the only living room open to the thatch, the bedrooms being at either end, and divided from it by partitions rising as far as the eaves. The kitchen was at the back, and a sale-shop, with an outer entrance, at the end. The walls were thick, and as all the shutters had been closed to keep out the flies, we found it cool inside. The floor was freshly cowdunged, and the general cleanliness indicated the presence of a female element. In due time the daughters of the house showed up, and attended to our requirements. One of them had just returned from school at Worcester, taking three weeks to do the journey in a waggon, though there is a railway part of the distance. They were all pale. Dutch girls spend too much of their time indoors, and the Boer habit of darkening the rooms does not encourage roses in their cheeks. The master of the house had fourteen children, which was not at all a large family as families go up-country.

On our return journey in the cool of the evening we saw more animals and birds. They had evidently been enjoying *their* siesta during the heat of the day. Amongst those we passed were two paauws (*Eupoditis caffra*), a large bustard deservedly prized for its good meat.

The day after our drive to Rietfontein, Mr. O, the assistant-engineer, arrived from Capetown. Until his hut was built, he was living with S, and he, therefore, joined company with us. He brought bad news from the front. After some delay, the

Galekas were "up," and burgher law had been proclaimed. Under the law, every able-bodied person—with a few exceptions, in certain parts of the colony, specified in a proclamation of the Government—was compellable to turn out armed against the enemy; and the burghers in other parts were required to hold themselves in readiness. It was an attempt to carry into exercise an old custom of the Dutch colonists. It was found afterwards that the Government had exceeded their powers, and the law was quickly allowed to drop. Meantime volunteers were being enrolled all over the colony, and preparations were made with an urgency which betokened the importance of the crisis. In addition, news came from Natal that Ketchwayo was ordering out his Zulus. The last rumour turned out to be false.

If I may judge by what I was constantly hearing in South Africa, it is clear that the Zulus had been expected to rise almost ever since the accession of Ketchwayo to the throne. There was a feeling amongst the colonists that a collision must come sooner or later; and at the time of which I am writing, it was only feared that it might occur during the war with Kreli and Sandili, and rumours were constantly circulated of risings. It was known that Ketchwayo's emissaries had been with Kreli, and that their master was cognizant of the rising of the Amaxosa tribe, which had caused the Kaffir war. It was also known that he had egged on Schkukuni in the Transvaal to declare war on the Boers, and afterwards against the English.

On the 10th of January we were treated to a second hot wind. I was driving out with S, to another part of his district, when it arose. It blew direct in our faces as we were going, and made us gasp for breath. The sweat oozed out at the pores, only to be caked by the clouds of dust which blew into the cart. On our way back, we secured a little immunity from the wind by fastening down the curtain at the back. But even out of the direct force of the hot breeze the air was unpleasant, and made our nerves tingle. It lasted longer than the first one, continuing after the sun had gone down. These hot winds blow from the Kalihari Desert. Fortunately they are not of frequent occurrence, and do not blow long together. If they came often they would make the country almost uninhabitable.

We noticed several signs of the electricity present in the atmosphere. Two evenings before I observed repeated flashes of lightning without a cloud being visible. The sand storms, or rather sandspouts, seemed also to have increased in number. I saw one from the stoep of the hut quite 500 feet high, and almost as thin as a chimney. It was not a long way off, and I could see the sand being whirled round and round at such a height that I had to crane my head back to observe it. The top was shaped like a palm tree. It continued to whirl as long as I could see, and long after the spout connecting it with the earth had disappeared.

One of the atmospheric peculiarities which the stranger cannot help remarking in South Africa is the intense blueness of the sky. At Capetown it was

so marked that I find myself referring to it in my diary with wearisome iteration. In a few days I got accustomed to it, and it passes without remark. On the Karroo it was particularly noticeable. Except on the rare occasions when thunder was hanging about, a cloud was seldom visible. I remember being aroused by S coming into lunch during one of our hottest days, soaking with heat. Wiping the sweat off his brow, he exclaimed, with the patriotic energy of a true Briton, "Oh, this everlasting blue sky. What would I not give for a little honest, cold, damp, misty, English weather!"

As a result of the absence of clouds and the brilliant sunshine, the atmosphere is remarkably clear, and causes persons educated in a muddier air to form most deceptive notions about distance. One day as S and I sat on the stoep, I remarked how clearly the indentations and kloofs in the Wittebergen showed themselves. S asked me how far away I thought the mountains were. I determined to be on the safe side, and hazarded a guess that they perhaps might be about eight miles off. He smiled, and told me, to my astonishment, that they were quite thirty miles distant. When we were travelling up-country afterwards, I noticed that when shooting at springbok, my friend R nearly always at first underestimated the distance. In fact he found it necessary to judge according to English ideas, and then to allow a longer range for the deceptive clearness of the sky. I did a little amateur photography—very amateur I am sorry to say—during my stay up-country. I carried

dry plates with me, which would bear two or three minutes in England. In South Africa I found an exposure of half-a-minute to be quite sufficient.

Our solitude was often invaded by navvies seeking work. My friend's district was only just formed, and when I joined him he was occupied in letting out contracts for the preliminary works. The navvies presented a curious medley. The bosses, or sub-contractors, embraced nearly all the European nationalities—English, German, Italian, and even Greek. The labourers were all colours, white, Malay Chinese, Hottentot, and Kaffir. Amongst the latter I saw during my journey up the line several of Sandili's Gaikas. They appeared to be well developed men, with an upright gait, and fine chests. Their dress consisted chiefly of necklaces, a couple of aprons before and behind, a girdle and a snuff-box, the latter stuck through a hole in the lobe of the ear. The engineers did not speak highly of their qualities as workmen. They lived on mealie scoff, or porridge made from maize. After Sandili broke out they began to slink away in small parties, and probably found their way back to their friends who were fighting the English.

R was longer coming up from Capetown than was expected. After I had been a week at Vlak Kraal, I received a letter from him describing a trial trip which he had taken in company with Mr. K and some friends from Capetown to Houts Bay, and which was a succession of mishaps. The swingle-trees gave way, the harness broke, the waggon stuck in the sand, and it was with difficulty they

regained Capetown. It took time to put everything right, and consequently he did not turn up till the 15th January. It was a very hot day, 105° Fahr. in the shade. S and I were sitting on a horse-waggon toiling up the road to the farm, which ran two or three hundred yards from the hut. I did not recognise it at first, but the sight of a Saratoga trunk tied behind the waggon convinced me it was ours. I had brought the trunk in question with me from England, but its shape and size caused it to be a most unpackable article, and it had been the occasion of sundry objurgations by R, which I am bound to say were not altogether undeserved. I shouted out with all my might. A well-known head was popped round the corner of the waggon. Hasty commands were issued to Jacob to stop, and in a few minutes R joined us. He had sent the waggon on to Jan de Boer's by train, travelling with Mr. R across Bains' Kloof in a cart. He had a look at the canteen where I passed a sleepless night, but liked it so little that he spent the night in the waggon. He said the waggon had required to have something done to it up to the last moment. He had had to have the bands of one of the wheels tightened at Buffels River ; and another wheel was found to be defective on arrival at Vlak Kraal, and had to be mended. English made vehicles are simply useless at the Cape. The wood is not half-seasoned enough to stand the dry climate. Even the waggons made at Capetown and Grahamstown are sure to shrink, and the wheels almost always require tightening on a journey up-country.

The day after R's arrival was the first wet day since I left Capetown. It was a day of extremes, and presented such a remarkable instance of weather on the Karroo, that at the risk of tiring the reader I must refer a little in detail to the meteorological phenomena which characterised it. R brought my wet and dry bulb thermometers in the waggon with him, and for the first time during my stay on the Karroo I was able to make some observations. At 9 a.m. the dry bulb marked 90° Fahr., and the wet bulb 72°. At 11 a.m. the dry bulb was 98°, and the wet 74°, showing a difference of 24°, and indicating a marked degree of dryness. About noon thunder clouds came over the sky and rain commenced to fall, and continued to descend at intervals during the day. It caused a change in the thermometers. At half-past one, the dry bulb had come down to 85°, the wet still standing at 74°. At 3 p.m., during a shower, the two were equal at 74°.

The sudden change manifested itself in me personally in a disagreeable way. While hovering about the waggon overhauling the contents of the lockers, and observing the dispositions which R had made for our comfort, I had an attack of hæmorrhage. It was the first attack of the sort and naturally disconcerted me. I retired at once to the hut, and spent the rest of the day and the next day in quiet.

On the 18th January, we started for Bloemfontein. S accompanied us as far as Rietfontein. Whilst we were at lunch in the hotel, the landlord

received an accession to his family in the shape of a fine boy, the fifteenth child. After lunch we said good-bye to S, and it was with real regret I saw his cart departing over the dusty Gouph. We had been thrown into one another's company very largely during the past three weeks, and I had found him not only a hospitable host, but a most pleasant companion.

After lunch (or "tiffin" as it is generally called at the Cape), we inspanned and drove still across Gouph to a lone public-house called Uitkyk. We crossed on the way several of the tributaries of the Gamka. They were all dry. At Uitkyk we had some difficulty in getting anything to eat. The people were even out of mutton, which is almost the only meat procurable as far as the Vaal River. It is playfully known as "365" in consequence of the number of days on which it is served up. After a little delay some salt beef was raked out, but it was too tough to masticate. Ultimately we got some bread and eggs, out of which we made a dinner. In consequence of my recent attack I thought it prudent to sleep indoors, and R had the waggon all to himself. My room was a sort of outhouse with a double door, but no window. The floor was covered with the usual dressing, and there was no ceiling. The bed was tolerably clean.

Next day we were up at 5·30, and after a hasty cup of condensed milk and coffee we inspanned and started on our way. The horses were fresh, and took us along gallantly. We drove for three hours across a flat and ugly country, and outspanned for

breakfast at a dirty little inn, whose name I do not know. Fortunately the people were English and we got a better and cleaner breakfast than we had anticipated from the appearance of things. We had two hours' more drive and then outspanned again on the veld amongst some mimosa bushes on the brink of a river bed. There was a small pool of water near our outspan place, and we were able to water the horses, and make ourselves comfortable. After a second meal cooked and eaten *al fresco*, we made a new start, and finally reached Beaufort at half-past five. About half way we had to cross a rocky ridge, and whilst driving up it we saw a number of baboons scampering across the road. Jacob and Larney set up a hullabaloo, and they went off across the veld in grand style. One, presumably a lady baboon, had a baby clinging to it.

## CHAPTER III.

### BEAUFORT TO THE ORANGE RIVER.

BEAUFORT, or Beaufort West, as it is properly called to distinguish it from a place with a similar name in the Eastern Province, is a small but pleasant-looking town. It consists mainly of one long street, planted with trees. Most of the houses have small gardens in front of them, decorated with oleanders and rose trees. The green trees and flowers looked very refreshing after the arid and treeless Gouph. We put up at the hotel, where we found fair quarters. Owing to the prevalence of drought we could get neither milk nor butter; and we had to do with condensed milk and sheep's fat in their stead.

We found everybody complaining about the drought. I was told that the sheep in the neighbourhood were perishing by hundreds, and a gentleman was pointed out to me who had lost eight thousand pounds worth of live stock during the summer. I have no reason to doubt the correctness of the statements made to me, and I believe them to be true. I cut an extract from a Beaufort paper containing an abstract of the rainfall from April 21st, 1877, to the end of the year, which shows a total result of 2·46 inches only during the nine months, taken by Mr. Jackson, of Lower Nilspoort,

who I may remark, *en passant*, is favourably known also as an ornithologist. Mr. Jackson remarks—

"The lambs of 1876 have nearly all perished; the lambing of last year was a failure, and the prospect for this year is very gloomy. Owing to the poverty of the ewes, we shall lose at least three weeks of our next season, and with many the drought is not even yet broken up. The rains we had in October were not followed up in November to any extent, and the veld, which was then benefitted, has since been parched up by the excessive heat, or destroyed by caterpillars. There are exceptions of course; but until we have a general soaking rain throughout the colony, there will be many anxious weary souls waiting for the only blessing which can restore them to prosperity and happiness."

A copy of Mr. Jackson's observations will be found in the appendix, in which I have also included a table of rainfall at Brakfontein, Victoria West, to the north of Beaufort. The two tables will give some idea of the difficulties with which farmers in this part of the colony have to contend. The average annual rainfall at Beaufort is only 9½ inches.

Beaufort itself is fairly supplied with water from some "fountains" in the immediate neighbourhood of the town. The pride of the burghers, and the wonder of this part of the colony, is a large reservoir which has been made for the purpose of supplying the common lands of the municipality with water. When it was first constructed it was forgotten that it was necessary to provide a bye-wash for the over-

flow water. The embankment consequently gave way during a wet season and there was a disastrous flood. It was reconstructed under the direction of a competent engineer, and, as if to provide for want of forethought in the past, a bye-wash has been made of capacity enough to empty the largest reservoir in the world. The water is drawn off by means of a syphon. When I saw it there was a mere sprinkling of water in it, about enough to float two or three boats, which were shown to me with great pride, and which I am free to confess were the only ones I saw on any inland water during the whole course of my travels in South Africa. The reservoir itself was very small when compared with the huge reservoirs in the West Riding of Yorkshire and Lancashire.

Beaufort is the centre of a large wool trade. At first sight it appears impossible for sheep to live on the miserable scrub of the Karroo, but as a matter of fact, they not only pick up a living, but thrive, except in times of drought. Some of the largest sheep-masters in the colony have farms in the neighbourhood of Beaufort. Amongst these was Mr. Molteno, the then Premier of the colony, who, with his partners, owned about 35,000 sheep. Most of the farms lay on the side of Beaufort, opposite to that through which we have been travelling. A large amount of ground is required to feed the sheep. On the Gouph one sheep is allowed for every four to ten acres, according to the position of the farm.

Shortly after our arrival I called upon Dr. Drew, the district surgeon. He considered my attack of

hæmorrhage a result of the sudden change in the weather, and did not think I should be again troubled with it—a prophecy which I am happy to say was verified. At the same time he thought the fatigue of travelling up-country was quite enough without further exertion, and he advised me to keep quiet, and to avoid shooting in particular, till I reached Bloemfontein. I was therefore compelled, not without a sigh, to give up collecting birds for the present. I had never done much with the rifle; I left that to R, who was all eagerness to get at the springbok.

I had some talk with Dr. Drew about the advantages of Beaufort as a residence for invalids with weak chests. He had been district surgeon for six years, and he said he had only seen one case of phthisis among the whole population during that period. The one case was a sequela of double pneumonia. I was astonished, after this, to hear that consumption of a very acute type was frequent among the black convicts in the prison at Beaufort. Dr. Drew attributed it to the sudden change from living on the open veld to the confinement of a prison, and from a maize diet to meat. He said rheumatism was not an uncommon disease both among whites and natives. He had a project for establishing a sanitarium in the Nieuwveld Mountains, 2,000 feet above Beaufort. As the town is itself 2,900 feet above sea level the desideratum of elevation would be thereby secured; the dryness being there already. The scheme will be worth consideration as soon as the railway to Beaufort is

completed. At present the discomforts of the journey across the Karroo forbid it to delicate patients.

While I was staying at Beaufort, news came from the Diamond Fields that the Korannas were "up," near Hopetown. The Korannas are a remnant of the ancient Hottentot race, and have preserved their national peculiarities better than most of the other Hottentot tribes. I came across them afterwards in the Free State. There was really a slight *emeute*, but it was put down without trouble. The whole of the native population of South Africa were in a state of agitation in consequence of the Kaffir war, and of Ketchwayo's movements, and spasmodic insurrections occurred weekly. It was most fortunate for the settlers that they were spasmodic.

We encountered at Beaufort the Chief Justice of the Free State, who was travelling to Bloemfontein in a mule waggon. He was in a pitiable condition, some of his mules having broken down, and others having run away. He got to Bloemfontein ultimately, but at the expense of a fresh span (or set) of mules. We were more reconciled to the price we had had to pay for our horses on seeing his plight. Travelling is no easy matter at the Cape. While we were at the hotel, a gentleman left for Capetown on the post cart. He would have fifty-two hours without sleep, except such snatches as he could get on the top of the rough vehicle. He told me of a friend of his who had made the journey through from the Diamond Fields a little time before, and who went temporarily mad from fatigue and want of sleep.

No wonder everybody who can afford it travels in his own cart or waggon.

We stayed two days at Beaufort. The horses were very fresh at starting, and it required all the efforts of Jacob to pilot us safely through the streets. They soon quieted down, however, and by the time we reached the reservoir they had settled into their usual steady jog trot. After leaving the reservoir we followed the course of the valley at the head of which it stands. The soil was Karrooish, but it had lost the fiery red of the Gouph. There was more scrub and fewer stones. The pervading tint was grey, and we could allow our eyes to rest upon it without suffering from the glare. A little time after leaving Beaufort we saw some Kaffir cranes. These birds are very amusing. They are dark coloured, and endowed with long legs, which they often employ in dancing on the veld. I have seen a regular quadrille party of them chasséing and setting to partners with all the mops and mows of a practised dancing master. When about to fly they run awkwardly along the veld for several yards, and then rise with long strokes of their wings into the air, screaming discordantly the while. Often times, as I lay awake in the waggon in the early grey of the morning, making up my mind to the inevitable turn out, I used to hear them winging their way overhead, out of sight but not of hearing. We outspanned during the heat of the day, from half-past eleven to half-past three, and had a dish of the inevitable "365," cooked *à la* Jacob on the gridiron. We arrived at our sleeping

place for the night, on the banks of Zout River, at half-past five, and I had my first experience of camping out. R declared the interior of the waggon too stuffy, and arranged his bed underneath it. I slept inside, and the two boys were somewhere out on the veld.

It may not be amiss to describe what our waggon was like, and the usual daily round of proceedings, so as to save repetition. The waggon was on springs, and lightly built for horses. The orthodox Cape ox waggon is heavily made, without springs, and is capable of an indefinite amount of rough work. At the slow rate at which an ox waggon travels, springs are not very important; and where heavy goods are carried, they are liable to fracture. In a horse waggon, which goes over the ground quickly, springs are a necessity, unless the passengers are prepared to be shaken to pieces. Our vehicle was a light edition of the ordinary Cape waggon, and was a sort of cross between a waggonette and an English farm waggon. The sides and bottom were of wood. There was a wooden top attached to the sides by stanchions. There were no windows, but between each stanchion was a curtain, made of white duck lined with green, which could be fastened down or rolled up at pleasure. Between the alternate stanchions were also square bags for holding immediate supplies of ammunition and other odds and ends. At the back was a door with a curtain or "klap" fitting on the upper half. The door was intended for ingress and egress, but my Saratoga trunk had been fastened behind and blocked up the exit that



KIMBERLEY DIAMOND MINE.

way. Inside the waggon were four lockers, one lined with tin for powder and cartridges. R and I sat in the middle, and the two boys on the driving seat in front. The rest of the available space was occupied by our baggage, and by fodder for the horses (universally called "forage" in South Africa). On either side of the vehicle were our "vatjies," or water-casks, and a powerful break ran from the driving seat to the wheels. There were seats supplied with the waggon, which were capable of being arranged as a bed at night. Altogether it was a neat, compact turn out, and quite sufficient for our purposes.

We usually started each morning at daybreak, about five o'clock a.m. In accordance with the universal custom of the country, we always had coffee before starting. After coffee the horses were "inspanned" (a convenient Dutch word, meaning harnessed or placed in their places in the span). The harness was always left on the ground in front of the waggon where it was slid off the horses' backs at the last outspan. It only required picking up, and sliding on again. Even with the simple harness used at the Cape, it is no light task to harness six restive, plunging horses; and I often admired the deft way in which our boys managed it, taking three horses apiece. Meantime R and I would be accomplishing our toilets at the bucket used for watering the horses. This done, and the blankets and sleeping *impedimenta* stowed away, we started on our journey. The outspan for breakfast depended usually on the supply of forage and water available,

and took place at all hours, from eight to eleven. Whatever the time of the principal outspan might be, Jacob made it a rule to take out the horses after they had travelled about an hour, to allow them to have a roll in the dust. A Cape horse will get through an infinity of work provided he is properly fed, and is allowed an occasional roll. I used to be amused at the deliberate way in which the beasts, after being outspanned, would lay down and wriggle themselves round, and then quietly rise and wait to be put in again. The roll really seemed to refresh them. For breakfast we usually had mutton, occasionally relieved by springbok steak, or korhaan. While we were getting our breakfast, the horses would have theirs in the shape of some bundles of oat hay, and then we would inspan and go on again. At the outspan for the night a portable canvass manger would be rigged over the disselboom, or pole of the waggon, and chaff cut for the horses by drawing the straw across a sickle fastened to the end of the disselboom. At the last outspan the horses were always groomed and then fastened to the waggon for the night.

In the morning we were up at five, and crossed the drift or ford across the Zout river. It was like driving down one side of the letter V and up the other. Jacob, however, made nothing of it. Putting the break on heavily, he wielded the whip, while Larney held the reins. We plunged over the edge of the drift, and slid down the bank, R and I holding tight to the side of the vehicle. Immediately we reached the bottom the break was taken off, the

horses lashed right and left, and in a few minutes we were on the opposite side. We soon became used to drifts, and ceased to excite ourselves at crossing them. It was a satisfaction to find, as we proceeded, that we could place full confidence in the driving of our boys. Jacob stuck at nothing.

I made the crossing at Zout River to be 3,100 feet above sea level. There was a little water in the river. After getting across, we drove over a succession of plains and ridges, to a place called Hartebeeste Hoek, where we outspanned for breakfast. We passed some paauw on the way, and also some korhaan. The korhaan is a bustard, smaller in size than the paauw. Both are good eating. While driving along we were struck with the mirage, which caused the distant hills to appear suspended in the air. Mirage is common on the plains in the summer, and plays at times most extraordinary freaks with the landscape. I never, however, failed to perceive that it was mirage, nor do I remember ever noticing such a resemblance to a pool of water as would be calculated to lead the most unwary thirsty soul out of his way. Either the stories one reads in Eastern books of travel, of the Will-o'-the-wisp nature, of the mirage are exaggerated, or the mirage of South Africa does not assume the same form as that of the North.

At Hartebeeste Hoek there was a dam with a little water. We had to pay a shilling for getting water from it. A man who was in charge of the dam, explained that the proprietor of the farm had been compelled to ask people to pay for the water in consequence of the great scarcity in the neighbourhood.

Sixteen hundred sheep were utterly dependent on the water in the dam, which was all but dry. The stock were dying all around in consequence of the drought. R shot some Namaquau partridges near the dam. Split down the middle and cooked on a gridiron, they offer one of the most dainty tit-bits wild cookery can supply. We spent the night at a place called Drei Fontein.

Next morning we were off at 5·30. Soon after starting R shot a korhaan. It was bigger than a guinea fowl. The general colour was brown, speckled with white. The Cape korhaan differs from the species commonly found to the north of the Orange River. The latter is black and white, and not quite so large. We outspanned at a quarter to nine, at a farm the Dutch name of which was "the magic spring." We breakfasted at a store. They had no meat, but they gave us some bad eggs, and uneatable bread. We were glad to inspan at half-past ten and get away. We drove up a steep road and over a sort of *col*, and then round the foot of a hill not unlike a haunch of mutton in shape, into the village of Murraysburg.

We stayed the night at the only hotel in Murraysburg. The proprietor of the hotel would have us taste the water out of a well of fresh water in his yard. He came upon the water by a process of reasoning from the lay of the surrounding country. The well furnished the only non-brackish water in the district, and naturally he was not a little proud of his possession. The village was well planted with trees, and looked like a little oasis in the middle of

the veld. In the evening I went up a small kopjie, or hill in the neighbourhood, from which I got a fine view of the town, and of Shizkop or Compassberg, which is the highest mountain in Cape Colony, if Basutoland be not included as part of the colony. Its height is given variously from 7,800 feet to 8,500. The shape was peculiar. The top part was a regular cone, which rested on the upper surface of a perpendicular rock with an upright face. The perpendicular rock was placed on the lower part of a second cone. It presented pretty much the appearance of a mass of sand on which a millstone had been placed, and over the millstone loose sand had been poured, so as to cover all except the sides. I do not profess to be much of a geologist; but it suggested strongly to me that the country around must at some time have sunk away round the upright core of the mountain, leaving the loose soil resting upon the top and against the walls. The hills generally in the north of the colony support the hypothesis. Very often they are perfectly conical in shape like a haycock, and quite as regular. Sometimes they present ridges, like the eaves of a house, with one end sliced off as clean as if it had been done with a knife. Everywhere there are suggestions of a rocky core, with sand resting against it at the highest angle of repose. Compassberg has been ascended. Owing to its regular shape the ascent presents little difficulty. The view from its summit is said to be remarkably fine.

We inspanned at half-past nine, and ascended a low flat-topped ridge, from the top of which we took

our last look at Compassberg and the village. We then went down into a large plain covered with scrub, and here and there a kind of grass, the first visible since leaving Capetown. The stones, which had been so plentiful on the other side of Beaufort, had almost disappeared, except on the ridges and on the tops of the "dykes" which intersected the country in various directions, and about which I shall have more to say when the Free State is reached. We passed over a second ridge and by the side of an ostrich kraal into another plain, where we outspanned near a dirty puddle of water. We had a light repast, and as soon as our horses were rested, started again. On the outskirts of the plain on which we had outspanned, we had a little variety in the scenery. We came to a ridge of stones piled one on the top another in endless confusion like a Titan's stone heap. They were chocolate coloured, and stood out richly against the deep blue sky. Some were covered with green lichens which made them look at a distance as if they were impregnated with copper ore. The road over the ridge was unpleasantly stony. I had my cushion with me, and our springs were good. I was by now a little hardened to concussions. Nevertheless, I was not sorry when we reached the bottom. A waggon has this disadvantage over a cart, that both fore and hind wheels have to be bumped over stones. Our reason for sitting in the middle was to minimise the double shock as much as possible. Jacob was a great adept at shaving past the worst stones, and I learnt to regret his neat handling of the whip when

I afterwards fell into the hands of Philistine drivers north of Bloemfontein. A touch with the whip and a slight pull at the reins sufficed. Sometimes I used to fancy he tried to see how near he could take us to holes and stones without coming into collision with them. After leaving the chocolate-coloured ridge we drove along the base of a lot of kopjies, some of which looked like heaps of sand dropped through an hour glass. "Kopjie" is Cape for a small hill; "kop" is a larger hill, and "berg" is the term for an elevation too large to be a "kop." Very small hills are known as "hooghts" or heights. The general term is "kop," which is applied to all sorts of hills.

We were now fairly within the Eastern Province, and already had met several wool waggons on their way to Port Elizabeth. The term Eastern Province is really a misnomer. Formerly the colony was divided into two provinces only, the Eastern and Western. In 1874 the old divisions were abolished and the country was split up into seven new provinces. Although, however, the old divisions have ceased to be, legally, they still survive in common parlance. No Cape colonist would misunderstand my meaning when I speak of the Eastern and Western Provinces; and it is convenient to adhere to the old designations. The two provinces are represented severally by Capetown and Port Elizabeth; and, as will have been already seen, they pull as well together as two men in love with the same woman.

We outspanned for the night near a farm house. We had our dinner right royally on the farmer's

granary steps, surrounded by an awe-struck audience of young blacks, the eldest of whom was airily clad in a tattered shirt, and the youngest not even in that. We got some eggs and milk at the farm, and I concocted an omelette, which R, who was very suspicious of my cooking abilities, could only say was a "little burnt."

We started early next morning and reached Richmond, our next stopping place, at ten. On the way we saw a wild ostrich on the veld. The bird regarded us in a nonchalant manner, and appeared quite indifferent to our presence. There is a heavy penalty upon anyone killing an ostrich or taking its eggs without the permission of the owner of the ground on which it is are found.

We put up at the Royal Hotel, where we found fair quarters and, *mirabile dictu*, both beef and butter. The front of the hotel faced a large square surrounded by one-storied houses and stores with corrugated iron roofs. The streets ran in straight lines from the square. They were lined with trees, but the trees were not sufficiently large to afford much shade from the almost vertical sun. Most of the houses had stoeps in front, but without protecting roofs. Our bedrooms looked on to the hotel yard, in which a calf separated from its mother kept bellowing during the small hours of the morning. I am not blood-thirsty by nature, but I could not help wishing that calf was veal.

Richmond is reputed to be the highest town in the colony. I made it 4,800 feet above sea level by my aneroid. The weather was quite settled at the

time, and I think the elevation may be taken to be nearly correct. But a solitary observation by means of an aneroid barometer is never more than an approximation, however fine the weather may be. I was informed of two or three cases of invalids suffering from chest diseases who had done exceedingly well. If my observations are correct, Richmond is at a higher level above the sea than Bloemfontein, and I should think it is quite as well suited for the residence of invalids. It is not on the direct line of any railway projected by the Cape Government; but it is only a day's drive from Graaf Reinet, which is some time or other to be the terminus of a railway. The landlord of the hotel said the climate was often severe in winter. The maximum temperature during my stay was 90°, and the degree of dryness was good. The hotel was not equal to those at Bloemfontein, but it was quite up to the mark of the usual colonial inns. The best plan for an invalid wintering at Richmond would be to get admitted as a boarder at a farm in the neighbourhood.

The population of the town is between nine hundred and a thousand inhabitants. It had sent seventy volunteers to the frontier to fight against the Kaffirs.

On Sunday I went to the English church, and found an instance of religious toleration quite unexpected in a country where the Anglican church is permeated with Tractarian notions. It appears that the English Protestants find it difficult to support several ministers; and thinking that the

end of religion is to agree rather than to quarrel, they have united themselves into one church. The minister conducts service in the morning out of the Prayer Book, and in the evening after the manner of the Evangelical Dissenters, without liturgy. The church was most crowded in the evening, but that arose probably from the heat, rather than from ecclesiastical differences.

During our stay we were "interviewed" by the editor of the local paper—a little broadsheet published in English and Dutch—who asked permission to record our names and the object of our travelling through the country in his paper. He did not seem to have a very exalted opinion of the Dutch Boers in his neighbourhood. He admitted, however, that education was beginning to tell among them, and he said the younger generation was more enterprising than the older one. He told us the incursion of English settlers was not regarded with complacency. One Boer complained to him that so many English were invading the country that the competition had actually compelled him to *work*. He amused us by describing the journey of a Boer from the neighbourhood to Capetown. When he arrived at Worcester, he was surprised beyond measure at the railway. He could not understand how carriages could move without horses, and although his friends represented to him that he would shorten the journey by taking the train, nothing would induce him to trust himself to the uncanny vehicles. I hardly wonder at meeting such ignorance in South Africa, when I remember a bedridden old

woman in the West Riding of Yorkshire, who was alive three or four years ago, and who for anything I know may be alive now, who was firmly convinced that there was no such thing as a locomotive. People offered to pay for a cab to take her to see the railway, but she refused to accept the offer: "she was not going to be made an April fool of, not she."

We left Richmond on Tuesday, the 25th January, at half-past six in the morning.

R got a shot at some steinbok soon afterwards, but failed to hit. Steinbok are generally hunted on horseback with short guns, loaded with heavy buck shot. A curious incident occurred a little later on. We came across a korhaan close to the road side. R fired and hit it, but he accidentally put a cartridge into his gun, loaded with No. 6 shot instead of buck shot. Unless caught under the wing, korhaan are remarkably difficult to kill, and the bird flew off, and we gave it up for lost. On the other side of the ridge we came across it again. It was being attacked by two falcons who had evidently noticed R shoot it, and who had set upon it in the hope of beating it down in its wounded condition. R stole up, but one shot did not suffice to drive the rapacious birds away. It was only after a second and a third had been fired that they flew reluctantly and sullenly off, leaving the korhaan for us. The veld in South Africa abounds in birds of prey. They pick up a living on the numerous ground birds and animals. It was always an interesting sight to watch them

hovering in circles round and round, higher and higher, until at length there would come a rush downwards, and the triumphant eagle or falcon would fly away with some hapless victim in its talons.

We outspanned from ten till three near a farmhouse called Schuurfontein. While getting our breakfast, we saw springbok in the distance. R immediately went off after them, and I found a snug place under the farmer's garden-wall, and indulged in a siesta. Our waggon was outspanned immediately in front of the house. At first it seemed stretching the laws of politeness to drive coolly into a farmer's yard, and water our horses at his private spring. By law every farmer is bound to allow at least one outspan place on his farm, but he may fix it where he pleases. Practically passengers outspan where they like ; and it is only the more churlish Boers who insist on their strict rights. The farmer generally came to wish us " gut morgen," and if we had understood Dutch I have no doubt we should have been invited inside the house in most cases. The proprietor of the farmhouse at Schuurfontein permitted me to climb over the wall into his garden in order to get under the shade of a tree, and he showed R the best point from which to reach the springbok. We found the farm houses in the Eastern Province superior to those on the Karoo, both in appearance and in size. At one or two places we even saw arrangements for washing sheep.

Shortly before three R came back from his stalk, dusty and red with walking about in the sun.

He reported the springbok to be very timid and difficult to get at. He had tried one or two long shots, but without effect.

We arrived about 6 p.m. at a village called Hanover. We stopped for the night at a small, but clean "accommodation" house, where, for a wonder, my bedroom had a boarded floor. The village streets were well supplied with water and planted with trees. There was a garden attached to the inn, in which were some mulberry trees. Immediately opposite was a house in the Gothic style, built of stone, two stories high. It had been erected by a grateful congregation for Mr. Burgers, the ex-President of the Transvaal Republic, who was at one time the pastor at Hanover of the Dutch Reformed Church. He was turned out of the Church for denying the personality of the devil, and was subsequently elected President of the Republic.

We made a short day next day. We did not get off till half-past nine, and we reached our sleeping place early.

We came across our first Bushmen at the outspan place, a farm called Andreas Fontein. They were living in company with Hottentots in some rude reed huts near the farmhouse. The little monkey-like creatures had on a few rags of clothing, which neither adorned nor protected them. A shrewd, impish girl, who came peering curiously about our waggon, was covered with a bit of old sacking. Although only about ten years of age, she had a smaller child under her charge, which she carried straddlewise across her hips. One of the women

had a baby in a pouch at her back, whose large eyes opened in wonderment as the mother passed our encampment. The Bushmen were probably not of the pure type. The black races in Cape Colony are so crossed with one another and with the whites, that it is difficult to find a native of a pure race.

We outspanned close to a sheep and cattle kraal, and the flies proved almost intolerable till the sun went down. I never appreciated the plague of flies let loose upon Pharaoh by Moses till I reached South Africa; and of all the evils of the country I should be inclined to set them down as the worst. While daylight lasts there is no escaping them; and sun up brings them back eager for the slaughter. South African flies bite like scorpions. As fast as one is killed, another takes his place. Drive them from one cheek, they settle on the other. Raise your hand to knock them off your face, and, as if in contemptuous mockery, they sting the back of the uplifted hand. By dint of continued worrying, they make the skin sensitive to a degree; and even after the welcome dark has driven them to repose, the irritated surface feels as if it were still undergoing the punishment. The mind shares the discontent of the body, and for the time the whole being feels at the acme of wretchedness. One of the insect torments which haunt the traveller is a large fly with grey stripes, known as the horse-fly. Its bite is as bad as that of a mosquito, and it is endowed with such vitality, that the only way of getting rid of it is to pull it bodily into pieces. If I were to travel again in South

Africa in the summer, I should certainly provide myself with a veil of some sort to keep off the flies.

When the flies had disappeared, we had for a little time to endure the clouds of dust raised by the flocks of sheep returning to the kraals. In South Africa the practice of kraaling the sheep at nights appears to be universal. At least I do not remember coming across any farm where the modern Australian practice of leaving them out all night obtains. The reasons alleged for kraaling them are the expense of inclosing a sufficient area, and the necessity of protecting the sheep from jackals and "tijgers" or leopards. In many parts of the country the dangers of midnight onslaughts of wild animals are very remote; and I cannot help thinking the improved value of the wool would pay for the expense of inclosures.

The sheep were in the charge of natives. One of the black shepherds was playing a native musical instrument, which has often been described, but which I had not seen before. It was a long stick, with little pegs about four inches from either end, between which was stretched a piece of gut. Near one end of the gut was a pear shaped membrane. The native held the membrane to his mouth, and by sucking it in and out produced three or four monotonous notes. I delighted him by asking to look at his instrument. The tune never varied, and I soon had enough of it, but the black performer appeared to think it was impossible to repeat it too often. He gave us half-an-hour's solo, rolling his head about in an ecstasy of enjoyment, and then

departed to regale his friends at the huts with a similar musical treat. We heard him too-tooing in the distance as we went to bed. In the morning he came to the waggon and gave us another serenade. The last we saw of him was as he drove his flock away over the veld, a raw leg of mutton slung at his dirty back, and his body quivering with delight at the melody he evoked. Before going he added to his accomplishments by singing an impromptu song, which Jacob intrepreted to be a violent tribute to his *own* abilities as a musician.

On our way to our next stopping place we saw a thicket of bushes not growing in a river bed. Pardon my chronicling such an apparently unimportant fact, but when it is borne in mind that it was the first thicket we had seen in such a situation for some hundreds of miles, it will be admitted there is some excuse for mentioning it.

We reached Colesberg at half-past eleven. It is built in a narrow valley, filled with heaps of large red stones, amongst which the houses are squeezed. Above the town, but not visible from it, is a conical-shaped mountain called Colesberg Kop, which we had noticed the day before. Colesberg has a reputation for being a hot place, and I do not wonder at it. There must have either been some very substantial reason, or some extraordinary want of reason to induce the first inhabitants to take up their quarters in such a stony and arid situation. The chief building of the place was an unfinished Dutch Reformed Church, with a portico of pillars in the Palladian style, big enough for a town with seventy thousand

people, instead of the seven hundred which constitute the population of Colesberg. We put up at the Masonic Hotel, where we got good feeding, but only moderately good lodging. Trusting to looks, I left my insect powder in the waggon, and was almost eaten alive during the night.

I took two photographic views of Colesberg—one of the town and the other of the kop. When I developed them at night I found I had accidentally taken them both on one plate. The hill made a fine background for the town, but as it was not there in reality, I felt compelled in the interests of exact science to destroy the plate.

Colesberg was the last place we were to stop at in the colony, and we started in the morning with eager anticipations of shortly reaching the Orange Free State. The road from Colesberg lay at first over some plains covered with mixed bush and grass, and then through a narrow rocky kloof (*Anglice* "cleft") between hills. The road through the kloof was in a fearful condition of disrepair. On the other side of the kloof we came across a toll-bar, where we had to pay a small sum, which we did with bad grace. We then drove downhill till we reached a place where the road bifurcated. In the absence of information we acted upon our own inner consciousness, and took the wrong road, and had the pleasure of retracing our way for some distance. The new road proved to be the right one, and at last we arrived on the banks of the Orange River, the boundary between British territory and the Boer Republic, known as the Orange Free State.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE GREAT TREK AND ITS RESULTS.

WHEN the English took possession of Cape Colony in 1806, the country north of the Orange River, now known as the Orange Free State, was occupied by the Basutos, a branch of the Bechuana family, and by half castes from the colony. The settlement of the Free State and of the adjoining territory across the Vaal River by whites was the result of "the great trek." It is the story of this "trek" and its consequences that I purpose to glance at in this chapter. It has been related several times, and it will not be necessary to detain the reader long over it. It is impossible to avoid mentioning it altogether in any book about South Africa and the Boers.

The word "trek" has been used several times already. The verb from which it comes is the same as the German verb "tragen." Primarily it means "to pull." It has, however, a variety of derivative meanings, and has got to be applicable to any sort of movement. A man "treks" when he starts on a journey. A place is a day's "trek" from another. An ox waggon "trek" lasts so many hours. A native is ordered to "trek" when it is meant that he should make "tracks"—a Yankee word possibly taken from the Dutch settlers in America.

The "great trek" was a great emigration, or movement of Boers from Cape Colony to the unsettled regions north of the Orange River, which took place in 1833 and the following years. The causes which brought about the emigration were various. In a memorandum published by some of the emigrants, they stated that they were chiefly aggrieved by the losses suffered by the emancipation of their slaves, to which they had been subjected in common with their fellow subjects in all parts of the empire. They also alleged the unsafe condition of the frontier, and the inadequate protection afforded by the Government against the Kaffirs. The main reasons which induced the movement were the advent of English emigrants, whose tastes and feelings clashed with those of the old Dutch settlers; the soreness connected with the slave emancipation, and the unskilful manner in which this great and necessary policy was carried out in the colony; but above all the unwisdom and disregard of colonial feeling shown by Lord Glenelg, the then Secretary of State.

Shortly after the bloody Kaffir war of 1834, and while the colonists were still smarting under the losses of life and property inflicted upon them by the natives, this good-hearted but wrong-headed philanthropist wrote a despatch in which he said "the Kaffirs had ample justification of the late war; they had to resent, and endeavoured justly, though impotently, to avenge a series of encroachments; they had a perfect right to hazard the experiment, however hopeless, of extorting by force that redress

which they could not otherwise hope to obtain." Lord Glenelg commanded the land taken from the natives to be restored to them, and initiated a native policy, which the Kaffirs attributed to fear, and to which the settlers, not altogether without reason, ascribe the Kaffir wars which have since desolated the colony.

It is easy to imagine how exasperating Lord Glenelg's language must have been to men whose farms had been pillaged, and whose sons and brothers had been slaughtered in the war. The new policy gave no security for future protection, at least in the eyes of the border settler, who was little inclined to trust his life to the generosity of a foe, supposed to be newly impregnated with philanthropical notions. The Boers were no strangers to "trekking." Years before the English occupation they had been in the habit of emigrating beyond the pale of their government whenever they were displeased with it. It was but an extension of a custom for which they had plenty of precedent. They had, however, never trekked in such numbers before, nor had there ever been such an enormous voluntary exile among the better and worthier classes of Boers as took place during the "great trek."

It is estimated that more than five thousand of the Dutch colonists voluntarily took to the wilderness. Amongst them were some notable names among the Boers, such as Pieter Retief, the field-cornet of the Winterberg district, Gert Maritz from Graaf Reinet, Piet Uys, an ancestor of the gallant Boer who fell recently at the battle of Zlobani and

many another name of weight. Some of the "voortrekkers" as they were termed, whose knowledge did not equal their enthusiasm, hoped to find the Holy Land on the other side of the Vaal River; and all were moved by feelings of expectation and promise.

One party of the voortrekkers found their way over the Vaal River, and came into collision with the Amatebele; and another crossed the Drakensberg, and met the Zulus, then in the full tide of conquest under Dingaan, the successor of the bloody and relentless T'Chaka.

The Amatebele were part of the Zulu tribe, who had expatriated themselves some ten years before, and had taken refuge in the country across the Vaal. They had established themselves under Selekatse, who was as ruthless, if not as able as T'Chaka himself. He suddenly attacked and cut off some of the advance parties of the emigrants. Emboldened by success, he then threw himself with five thousand followers upon an encampment under the leadership of Potgieter. The Boers were only about forty in number, but they knew how to fight. They drew their waggons into "laager," placing them end to end in a circle, and filling up the interstices with mimosa bushes. They ensconced themselves behind with their large-bore muzzle-loading roers or elephant rifles. This amateur entrenchment proved impregnable, the Amatebele were driven off with the loss of a hundred and fifty men, but not before the farmers had lost their cattle, which were outside the laager.

The Boers determined to read Selekatse a lesson. They got together a larger party, and with the help of some friendly natives, secretly and suddenly attacked Moorga, the chief kraal or village of the Amatabele. Their measures were taken so skilfully that the natives were surprised. Four hundred of them were killed, and a great part of the cattle were recaptured. Having thus smitten the heathen hip and thigh, the Boers retired grimly to an encampment on the other side of the Vaal, where fresh parties of emigrants came daily to swell their numbers.

The next step was to appoint Retief their leader, and to renounce formally their allegiance to England. Retief entered into treaties of alliance with the Basutos and the other native tribes between the Orange and Vaal Rivers, and many of the Boers settled themselves permanently in the country.

About this time one of the emigrant trains discovered Natal on the opposite side of the Drakensberg. The well-watered and luxuriant pastures of the new country were too tempting to be resisted, and the wave of emigration rolled over the rocky barrier into the fertile plains below.

Natal was originally inhabited by the Amafengu and kindred tribes, who were driven southwards by the Zulus under T'Chaka. They found refuge from T'Chaka—not inaptly termed the Attila of South Africa—among the Amapondos and Amaxosa Kaffirs, who held them in a state of serfdom, from which they were released by the English. The

Fingoes, as they are now called, hate their old masters with a bitter hatred, and fought them during the late Kaffir war with right good will. They have been established along the Kaffir border, and form an effectual cordon between the natives and the whites.

The Zulus were at one time an insignificant branch of the Kaffir family. They owe their present position to the genius of T'Chaka, who may be regarded as the founder of the nation. This extraordinary man revolutionised the practice of native warfare. He formed his soldiers into regiments; he introduced a system of drill and manœuvering; he banished the light-throwing assegai which had previously been used, and substituted a short stabbing spear which compelled his troops to come to close quarters. He enforced obedience to the death. He would sometimes order a regiment to bring him a young lion unwounded and alive, or to put a bush fire out by stamping on it, as a test of their obedience. Any man who showed signs of cowardice was massacred without mercy. Under such a leader the Zulus rose into first rank. They devastated the whole coast region from Delagoa Bay to Pondoland. Fugitives from the wrath of T'Chaka, and deserters from his army, in their turn, laid waste the present Transvaal territory and Free State, and millions of natives perished either directly or indirectly through this one man.

T'Chaka was murdered at the instigation of his brother Dingaan, who was reigning over the Zulus when the Boers poured over the Drakensberg to

possess the land. Dingaan had all the cruelty of his brother, but not his ability. He was of a cunning, foxy disposition, and he succeeded only too well in luring some of the earliest and best of the emigrants to their destruction.

In 1837, Retief, the chosen leader of the Boers, crossed the Drakensberg into Natal. He was a man of high character and real principle. He was anxious to buy rather than seize land from the Zulus, contrary to the usual practice of the Boers, who looked upon the heathen as an inheritance delivered into their hands by the Lord; a convenient application of the only history with which they were familiar, that of the Old Testament. Dingaan appeared at first unwilling to part with any of his territory, but ultimately consented to let the Boers have some land if they would recover for him a number of cattle which had been stolen by Sikonyella, a subordinate chief. The Boers pursued Sikonyella and brought back the stolen oxen, and a party of them, headed by Retief, then went to Dingaan's kraal to ask him to perform his part of the agreement. Retief was warned beforehand of the treacherous disposition of the chief. His friends requested him not to risk his own life, but to let some of the younger men take his place. Retief said he could not send any one where he was afraid to go himself, and went to Dingaan with only sixty-six men as an escort. The wily chief received the farmers with every appearance of cordiality, and readily executed a deed of cession of the promised lands. The Boers, highly delighted with their

reception, prepared to return to their wives and friends. A formal interview was arranged for the purpose of saying farewell. When they attended at the kraal for this purpose, they were informed that it was against Kaffir etiquette to take their guns into the kraal, and they were persuaded to leave them outside. It was a foolish confidence. While they were seated drinking beer, a cry was raised, "Bulala umtagatie" (kill the sorcerers), and despite their desperate resistance they were all murdered in cold blood.

The Zulus immediately attacked the various Boer encampments scattered over the country. At one place, now called for that reason "Weenen," or "Weeping," they succeeded in effecting a great slaughter. At the principal encampment at Bushmans River the Boers formed their waggons into laager and were able to beat off their bloodthirsty enemies. Having secured temporary protection by their valour, they sent urgent messages to their friends across the Drakensberg to come over and help them. The latter were not slow to respond to the call. In three months a little army of four hundred men was collected and marched against Dingaan. The pluckiness of this action is remarkable when it is borne in mind that Dingaan's army was composed of at least twenty thousand men. The first proceedings of the Boers were unfortunate. They were enticed into an ambuscade and had to retire with heavy loss. A second attempt was made under the leadership of Pretorius. With about six hundred men he crossed the Tugela into Zululand.

His army was attacked by Dingaan at the head of twelve thousand Zulus. The Zulu braves rushed with repeated eagerness against the Boer laager. For three hours the contest was maintained, when Pretorius, seeing a favourable moment, ordered a charge on horseback against one of the flanks of the Zulu army. The charge was successful. The Zulu's formation was broken up, and they were defeated with great slaughter.

Dingaan did not long survive his defeat. His brother Panda revolted against him, and forced him to take shelter among the Amaswazi, where he was assassinated by one of his own body guard. He died as he lived. Treacherous and bloody had been his life; treacherous and bloody was his end.

After Dingaan's death the Boers placed Panda on the throne and erected Natal into a Boer republic with the name of Natalia. A Volksraad, or Parliament, was constituted, and the emigrants parcelled out the country into farms, on which they settled, hoping at length to find rest. But this was not to be. The English Government at the Cape had for some time watched the proceedings of the emigrants with uneasiness. Some gross cases of cruelty, towards their native dependents, on the part of the Boers, who were again relapsing into their system of lording it over the sons of Ham, roused the sleeping suspicion into action. The authorities determined to take possession of Natal in the name of the Crown, and Captain Smith was sent with a small detachment of cavalry to Durban.

The feelings of the Boers had been much worked

upon by a vagabond Dutchman, named Smellekamp. This man informed them that all Holland, which he represented as the most powerful State in Europe, was in sympathy with them, and was sending them arms and ammunition. Emboldened by his representations they blockaded Captain Smith in Durban, and reduced his garrison to such extremities that the troopers were obliged to kill their horses for food. Information of their situation was conveyed to the colony by a man named Richard King, who performed the feat of riding 400 miles to Grahamstown in nine days, through the wild country of Kaffirland, by unknown tracks, and over dangerous rivers. For his gallant performance King was rewarded by a grateful Government with a miserably inadequate pecuniary pittance.

Just when the little garrison was at the last gasp, relief came in the shape of two British ships of war. The Boers retired in confusion. Ultimately, they determined to submit to the paramount power. Smellekamp was sent back to Holland. The Volksraad dissolved itself. Those of the emigrants who were altogether opposed to the British, trekked back over the Drakensberg. The remainder settled peaceably on their farms, and Natal became an English colony.

We must now follow the fortunes of the emigrants on the western side of the mountain range. In the absence of their leaders something like anarchy had begun to reign among them. The head of each family did what was right in his own eyes, and as this was usually what was not right in the abstract, when

natives were concerned, the Boers soon found themselves embroiled with the Basutos and the Griquas, a half-caste Hottentot tribe, which had settled on the Vaal River. The Griquas implored the aid of the English. A British resident was placed at Bloemfontein, but his mere presence did not effect much good. His orders were disregarded, and the laws of the strongest became the rule of the day.

While things were in this state a new Governor arrived at the Cape; this was Sir Harry Smith, the "hero" of Aliwal and Sobraon, who deserves more than a passing word. He was a curious mixture. Brave and dashing to a degree, he united to his dash a wit and cunning which fitted him well for the country he came to govern. I have talked with men who served under him, and it is pleasant to find how, even at this long interval, they regard him with affection, notwithstanding his imperfections. He possessed an uncontrollable temper, and when excited his oaths were fearful. But the paroxysm over, he immediately became the courteous and sympathetic commander, only too ready to apologise for anything he might have said or done during his Bersek rages. I remember seeing a story of him in a Cape magazine which aptly illustrates his character:—

It was during a negotiation with the Kaffirs in the east of the colony. Some native chiefs had shown a tendency to rebel. Sir Harry summoned them to a conference with him, at which he determined to urge them into submission. He arranged

a speech about the greatness of England. At a proper place he was to touch the spring of a galvanic battery, which was connected with some kegs of gunpowder placed under a waggon on a neighbouring hill, and which it was hoped would be blown to pieces. Sir Harry commenced his speech. The crisis arrived. The connection was made; but unfortunately the waggon was too well built to explode, and was only tilted on end. But, notwithstanding the failure of the carefully rehearsed drama, the interview did not come to an end without a real theatrical performance. After the set speech was ended, one of the chiefs ventured to express a doubt of the intentions of the British. This was too much for Sir Harry. Carried away by a fit of rage, he drew his sword, and presenting it at the naked breast of the savage, he swore he would run him through if he did not there and then take an oath of obedience to the Government. The assembled chiefs were cowed by the unwonted outbreak. One after another they subscribed the required submission, and Sir Harry's wrath averted a Kaffir war.

Soon after his arrival Sir Harry Smith visited Natal, and met Pretorius and a number of disaffected Boers. His courteous manner had a great effect on them, and Sir Harry, thinking that there was no danger to be apprehended, except from a small minority of irreconcilables, issued a proclamation annexing the country between the Orange and Vaal Rivers to England, by the name of the Orange River Sovereignty. Pretorius determined not to submit. He called out a Boer commando, or levy, and com-

pelled the British Resident at Bloemfontein to retire across the Orange River.

Sir Harry acted with characteristic promptitude. Within a few hours after hearing of the outbreak the British troops were on the way. Sir Harry overtook them before they reached the Orange River. Contrary to his expectation, the Boers did not dispute the passage of the river. They were not met with till the English column reached Boomplats, where a battle took place. The rebels were defeated, and fled in disorder. The Resident was re-instated at Bloemfontein, and British rule was again declared over the country. Pretorius and his followers had retired behind the Vaal River.

The Resident soon found his was not a bed of roses. The Boers recommenced their quarrels with the natives, and the latter theirs with one another. Moshesh, the paramount Chief of the Basutos, began to show his teeth. A cattle lifting raid on Moroko, a native ally (who is still alive and hearty at his hereditary kraal, near Bloemfontein, though more than ninety years old), brought the wily Basuto into conflict with the English. The British troops were just then required in the colony to deal with the Kaffirs, who had broken out again. An inadequate expedition was sent against Moshesh, and was compelled to retire, and the whole country fell into a state of confusion.

When tidings of the state of affairs reached England, it was determined to abandon such a white elephant. The English residents implored and supplicated not to be deprived of British protection.

They represented that they had expended their money on the faith of that protection. Two gentlemen were sent to England to remonstrate. Their efforts were fruitless. The Home Government were determined to abandon the country. A convention was signed with the Boer leaders, under which the country was surrendered to them. Some of the English farmers returned to the colony, others remained, and united with the Boers in forming a Government.

There can be no doubt the abandonment of the country was a mistake. It was urged at the time that it was an error, but the then Government had deliberately entered upon the policy of casting off colonial responsibilities to the utmost extent, and the surrender of the Free State to the Boers was only part of that policy. At the present time the Boer Republic remains an *imperium in imperio*, surrounded on all sides by British territory. Its inhabitants—left originally in the cold, and at the mercy of the Basutos, and since sufferers from a reactionary and high handed policy which was adopted for the purpose of retrieving the primal mistake—are not particularly anxious to enjoy the fluctuating advantages of British rule.

The new state proceeded to elect a Volksraad, which was invested with supreme power. All white property-owners were declared capable of exercising the right of electing the members of the Volksraad; but the blacks were excluded. Indeed, such little favour has been shown to the natives generally in the Free State, that they are comparatively few in

number, and there is often difficulty in finding labour sufficient for the modest requirements of the farmers.

The difficulties with the Griquas were got over by the aid of the English Government. The Cape authorities offered Adam Kok, the Griqua chief, a piece of land on the borders of Natal, known as No Man's Land. Kok and his followers emigrated thither, giving to their new possession its present name of Griqualand East. Their farms were partly bought up by the Boers, and part was considered so valueless that the Griquas, who chose to remain, were allowed to live in peace, no one caring to disturb them. Part of this valueless territory now contains the most valuable piece of ground in the world, the Kimberley diamond mine.

The Basutos were much harder to deal with. Moshesh respected the power of the British, and even when he got the better of their small force, previous to the abandonment of the Free State, he used his victory only as a means of procuring peace. His respect did not, however, extend to the Boers. Almost immediately after the English had withdrawn, he recommenced pilfering and cattle lifting. Three Basuto wars followed, which exhausted the finances, and delayed the progress of the infant state. In the last war Moshesh was defeated, and had to give up some of his land to the victors. Only a year afterwards, nevertheless, he was at it again. This time the Boers gained the upper hand. Moshesh's stronghold, Thaba Bosigo, was surrounded. The chief, now an old man, saw the extermination of

his tribe threatened. In his extremity, he appealed to the Governor of Cape Colony. The British policy of abstention had changed meantime into one of interference. The Basutos were accepted as British subjects, and the Free Staters were compelled to retire, which they did as unwillingly as fox-hounds baulked from the last reward of their labours.

The Boers alleged that the convention between them and the British had been violated. By one article it had been stated that Her Majesty's Government had no wish or intention to enter into any treaties which might be injurious or prejudicial to the interests of the Free State. The Boers argued that the article prevented the British from intervening in any transaction between them and the natives. It was impossible for the English Government to admit that they had deprived themselves of the right to deal with the natives of the interior. A Boer deputation was politely bowed away, and the Basutos remained British subjects. Their present condition is very hopeful. They have settled into a prosperous and fairly educated nation. During the late troubles, the bulk of the Basuto people remained faithful to the English; and their state is a happy augury of the success of intelligent efforts to grapple with the native question—the pressing difficulty for South Africa.

The acceptance of the Basutos was adopted as a precedent in a future transaction. A Griqua Chief, named Waterboer, became a British subject for the

purpose of defeating the claims of the Free State to land in Griqualand West. Neither the English nor the Dutch cared much about the ownership of it, and the right to it, though disputed *pro forma*, remained in abeyance by tacit consent till the occurrence of an event which changed the whole aspect of affairs. This was the discovery of diamonds. The hitherto worthless land became suddenly of first importance. The Free State took possession of it, but were only able to exercise such ownership as the diggers, who had rushed thither in torrents, permitted them to display. The English then claimed it. Their claim was disputed, but they cut the Gordian knot by annexing the whole territory in dispute, and it now forms the colony of Griqualand West. I have made some attempts to ascertain the rights of the question, but it is in as chaotic a condition as the dry-as-dust papers of which Carlyle so feelingly complains. So far as I can ascertain, the British claim was as good as the Free State, which is saying a great deal. Sir A. Stockenstrom, who was appointed to settle the claims to land in the disputed territory, informed me he had often as many as ten concurrent claims to deal with. The British Government have since paid £90,000 to the Free State Government in full settlement of all their possible claims, and the right to take possession of the territory is fully conceded.

Practically the Free State has been much better off by being deprived of the right of sovereignty. It could never have dealt with the unruly population at the Diamond Fields. The diggers would have

either defied the efforts of the Free State to exercise government over them, or else by coercion or out-voting the farmers they would have compelled them to place themselves under England. As it is, the Free State has had the greatest share of the traffic between the fields and the ports. Its farmers have been able to find a market for their produce and to pay off the mortgages on their farms, and the whole country bears evidence of the benefits derived from its nearness to the diggings.

Turning now to the Boers on the farther side of the Vaal River, we have to contemplate a less satisfactory picture. Previous to the battle of Boomplats, they formed a small proportion of the total number of the emigrants. But after the defeat of the Boers, and the proclamation of British sovereignty south of the Vaal, their numbers were swollen by a quantity of the more disaffected emigrants under Pretorius. The British never affected dominion over a country so remote as the Transvaal was then considered to be. A short time before the Free State was abandoned, a convention was signed between the Transvaal Boers and the British Government, by which the emigrants were left to their own devices. This convention is known as the Sand River Convention, and has occasioned much discussion since the recent annexation of the Transvaal, inasmuch as it contains provisions that no "encroachment" shall be made by the British Government, and no alliance entered into between them and any native tribes beyond the Vaal River.

While Pretorius lived, the country was kept in something like order. A series of petty wars occurred with the natives, in which the latter, when defeated, were slaughtered with merciless severity. Their children were allotted to the burghers as apprentices, and thus a cover was given to slavery, which had been expressly forbidden by the Sand River Convention. Pretorius died eighteen months after the independence of the country had been formally recognised. For some years after his death the jealousy of the Boers led them to close the country against Europeans. Very little was known of them, except when some commando was issued forth for the purpose of chastising a neighbouring native tribe. It was one of these commandoes which broke up the mission station of Dr. Livingstone among the Bechuanas, and compelled that great man to commence his journey across Africa.

Two events occurred in the early part of the present decade, which occasioned the country to come once more before the notice of the world. These were the discovery of gold at Lydenburg and other places, and the election of Mr. Burgers as President. When rumours of gold having been found reached the ears of the outside world, the most persistent efforts of the Boers were unable to keep off the inevitable digger. The eastern part of the Hooge Veld was invaded by miscellaneous hordes from all parts, and the country was once again opened out. Mr. Burgers was elected in 1872, and on his election he immediately initiated a new policy. He invented a flag for the South

African Republic, as the Transvaal Boers proudly called their country. He devised an elaborate scheme for education. He negotiated a loan to pay off the paper currency, which was at a tremendous discount. He even elaborated a brand new coinage, to be made out of Lydenburg gold. All this was very praiseworthy, and sounded well. Unfortunately the Boers did not care for a bit of bunting. There were no schoolmasters to carry out the education plan. The finances and credit of the Republic were alike exhausted, and the diggers stuck to their gold. But Mr. Burgers was indefatigable. He recognised the fact that it was impossible for the country to be developed without a market for its produce. He therefore proceeded to Europe and arranged with Portugal for a railway to Delagoa Bay, and with Holland for the money for making it. It is needless to say the railway has not been made, and I am afraid the Hollanders have heavy reason to regret their good nature.

It was trying to make a purse out of a sow's ear. The cruel policy of the Boers towards the natives, and the inherent rottenness of the whole fabric of the government were fast bringing the nation to grief. During Mr. Burgers' absence everything went wrong. The natives in the north and east began to be restless. Sekkukuni, a Bapedi chief, commenced a series of cattle-lifting expeditions. On Mr. Burgers' return, a grand commando was inaugurated against the thieving chieftain. An attack was made on his stronghold. A few bold spirits penetrated into it. But the cowardice of the

main body, who failed to support them, compelled a retreat. The members of the commando lost heart. The old Boer pluck seemed to have totally deserted them. They protested against being led to fight, and to the chagrin of their chief, who, with all his Quixoticism, was a brave man, they broke up the levy, and returned to their homes. And when they reached home, they refused to pay a war tax levied for the purpose of carrying on the war with paid help.

The situation became serious. A million natives were pressing round the borders. Ketchwayo, the Zulu king, threatened to harry the country. The Government was without funds. The country was flooded with adventurers of the worst class. The people were without union, and everything was in disorder.

The paramount power felt compelled to interfere. Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the administrator of the natives in Natal, was sent into the Transvaal as Special Commissioner to investigate and report, with power, if he thought it advisable for the security of the white races of South Africa, to annex the country to England. Sir Theophilus thought it eminently advisable. He carried his powers into effect, and on the 12th April, 1877, the South African Republic ceased to exist, and the Transvaal became British territory.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE ORANGE RIVER TO BLOEMFONTEIN.

The Orange River takes its rise in the southern prolongation of the Drakensberg range of mountains, which is known as the Quathlamba. From the mountains it strikes off towards the west, and after running through two-thirds of South Africa, it falls into the Atlantic Ocean. To look at it on the map, it would seem to be the natural highway to the Free State and the southern part of Cape Colony; but, unfortunately, the lower part of its course is choked with obstructions, and it is not navigable. Between the Atlantic, and the point where we crossed, it is joined by the Vaal River. The latter river rises in the Transvaal, and forms the northern boundary between that country and the Free State. It then turns southward, and, after running close past the celebrated Diamond Fields, falls into the Orange River, not far from the point where the boundaries of Griqualand West, the Colony, and the Free State meet. The Orange Free State is thus bounded on two sides by the Orange River, and its tributary. On another side lie the Drakensberg range and the mountains of Basutoland. The remaining boundary is an imaginary line fixed by the British Government, and known as the Platberg line.

We did not see the river itself till we stood on the banks. Like all the South African streams, it was in a deep gully. The slope of the country on either side indicated its position some time before we reached it, but no water was visible from a distance. At the point where we crossed, the banks were formed of beds of sand, with a gentle incline, which permitted a descent to the water's edge. The sand only continued for a short distance up the stream, being replaced by precipitous cliffs, between which were stretched the wires of the telegraph. A little higher up was a bridge in process of construction across the stream, at a height sufficient to ensure its not being carried off by floods. Hitherto, the river has been unbridged. Bridges are very rare in South Africa. Except the railway bridge, we had not seen one since leaving Worcester. Another bridge is being constructed higher up the river, and the two will materially facilitate communication with the interior. They ought to have been constructed long ago.

Below the ferry, the river took a bend and finally disappeared among the mountains. The water was of a turbid, almost orange tint. If I had not known that it was named originally after a Prince of Orange, I should have thought it owed its designation to its colour. We crossed on a "pont," or ferry, worked by ropes stretched across the stream, which carried our waggon and six horses and a two-horse cart with ease. There was enough water where we crossed to float a small-sized ship.

Our first experience of Republican roads was

not satisfactory. Attempts are made in Cape Colony to repair the roads occasionally, but in the Free State they are simply tracks *au naturel.* I heard that the Free State Volksraad were shamed a year or two ago into passing a law, that land proprietors should repair the roads passing through their farms; but, in accordance with the happy custom of the farmers of not obeying enactments which do not suit their convenience, the law was ignored, and the roads remain as bad—or as good—as ever.

At first, the appearance of the veld was very similar to that which we had left on the monarchically governed side of the river, but soon grass commenced to appear. Ultimately, all the veld became grassy, and the country began to look greener and fresher—a welcome sight to eyes surfeited with yellow and brown scrub and stones. Here and there were actually oxen grazing.

We spent the night at Philipolis, a small and rusty-looking village, notwithstanding its pretentious name. The houses were mostly of sunburnt brick, and were without the least ornament, except here and there a faint attempt at a parapet in front. They were dotted down in the streets without much regard to symmetry of arrangement. We drove to a small hotel kept by English people, where we got a fairly good dinner, or supper, as the Boers call it. I ferreted out some tattered *Family Heralds* in the inn, and we were able to enjoy a little literature in the evening.

We left Philipolis early next morning. We drove

slowly upwards into a plain covered partly with brush and partly with grass, but dried up and yellow. From a ridge above it the plain presented the appearance of a huge stubble field, with a little green grass among the stubble. It was from eight to ten miles across. There were horses feeding upon it, and mixed with them, as if to secure safety from rifle shot, were a few springbok. A few clouds were visible in the sky. We had noticed occasional clouds, in the hitherto cloudless void of azure, since leaving Richmond. We outspanned for breakfast at a farm, and then drove over short parched grass till we reached a store, where we found English people. One of them was a Port Elizabeth man, who had come to the Free State for his health. When he left the sea-shore, consumption was threatening, but he said two years' residence in the Free State had set him up again. He had, however, had an attack of pleurisy during the winter. His health had been shattered by a fever caught at the Diamond Fields. He said he had been lucky as a digger. He found one diamond for which he refused three thousand pounds at the Fields, in order to sell it in London. Before a sale could be effected in England, a panic occurred in the diamond market, which reduced the price of the precious stones, and he only got three hundred and fifty pounds for his diamond! We had a little refreshment at the store, and I tasted for the first time the fruit of the prickly pear. It has a sweet farinaceous taste, and is full of little hard pips.

Shortly after leaving the store we came across more springbok. Up to the present R had been

unsuccessful in shooting any. He was a fair shot at a target at home, but he found shooting antelope on the open veld a very different thing. At first, it is impossible to judge the distance correctly, and unless the proper sights are elevated, no amount of correctness as regards the direction of the shot will secure the quarry. Besides, springbok are both keen and wary, and will often spring six feet into the air on seeing the flash of the rifle. On this occasion R was successful in planting a bullet in the neck of a buck, and we had the pleasure of eating it later on.

The springbok is a graceful antelope, standing about as high as a table. It is light brown, with a peculiar white streak on its flanks. When irritated or alarmed, it has a trick of elevating the hairs on its body, which then appears to be almost white. The streak is visible up to about three hundred yards, and its appearance assists in forming a judgment as to the distance of the animal. The springbok derives its name from the graceful leaps it makes. I have seen a number of these creatures springing one after the other six feet into the air, and clearing the road ahead of us at a single bound. The Boers generally hunt it on horseback. There is no cover on the treeless, grassy plains of the Free State, and it is difficult to get at game by stalking. Two or three Boers will ride at the centre of a herd from opposite points of the compass, and when they have got as near as possible on horseback to the panic-stricken animals, they dismount, and levelling their rifles across the backs of the horses, fire at the springbok.

Constant practice makes the Boers very expert with the rifle. As a rule they are very chary of spending money, but they will expend it freely on the purchase two things—a rifle, and a waggon. I found rifles of the best and latest pattern in use in the Free State, and occasionally in the hands of farmers who, so far as regarded domestic comforts, were no better off than Irish labourers.

Soon after the springbok was shot we passed a farm called Tow Fontein, where a skirmish took place between the Boers and the British. A little further on we reached Boomplats, the scene of the victory gained by Sir Harry Smith over Pretorius and his Boer commando. We outspanned at the farm of Boomplats, and were received in a most inhospitable fashion. On asking leave to outspan, the people at the farm tried to persuade us to drive on, and we had to point out that our horses had had a very hard day's work, before we could wring from them a surly permission to remain. Seeing that they did not desire our company, we proposed to go out on the veld some distance from the house, but they insisted on our outspanning near a sheep kraal, where we had the full benefit of the noise and dust occasioned by the sheep. We asked them to sell us some forage. They declined at first, and then asked the outrageous price of seven shillings and sixpence a bundle. Next day they were ashamed of their rapacity and came down to one-and-ninepence, which we were obliged to pay them, though it was ninepence more than the proper price, and more than we had paid anywhere else.

The next day was Sunday, and as we had heard there was a large number of springbok between Boomplats and Bloemfontein, we determined to lay by for the Sunday, and go on on Monday morning. R was slightly unwell, and lay inside the waggon. I took up my position with a book underneath it, till midday, when Larney reported that there was some shade from the fierce rays of the sun under a tree near the farm "Fontein." I repaired thither with a hammock. There was a little shade, but by way of compensation, there were also a number of skins rotting in the water which did not improve the atmosphere. The rest of the day, I hovered between the tree and the waggon. I saw several birds near the Fontein, including a heron, and a beautiful whidah bird with a tail about three times its own length.

All this time, none of the people at the farm came out to speak to us, or to ask us to take shelter from the heat. I could not help thinking that even in England, where hospitality is not a duty as it is in South Africa, a farmer would have hardly watched us bivouacking in his yard for a day and a half, without at least giving us a kindly word, if not asking us in. We paid for the privilege of outspanning by the forage we bought, but we expected a more cordial welcome, especially as the house was a superior looking one, and the buildings were respectable and tidy. At the time, I attributed our reception to the Boer hatred for the British, and have chronicled it as an instance of national animosity in my diary. But experience shows how

fallacious it is to base theories upon isolated cases. I found afterwards that the Boers, with but few exceptions, were exceedingly hospitable to the British as well as to their own people; and a long time subsequently I learnt that the farmer at Boomplats had shortly before our arrival been swindled by a "smart" Englishman, and that we visited his house while the sense of his wrong was thick upon him.

During our stay at Boomplats I made a sketch of the battle-field. It is a large plain surrounded by flat-topped hills covered with low bush, at the base of which were a multitude of stony rantzes. The term rantz is untranslatable. It is applied to the huge ridges of irregularly shaped stones which cross the veld in all directions, looking like railway embankments in the process of construction. The rantzes often mark the outcrop of the "dykes" of hard rock of which I have before spoken. The stones are all sizes, from blocks as big as a table, to small fragments the size of a closed fist. They are angular or square in shape, never rounded. The stones are interspersed with mimosas, wild olives, cactuses, and prickly pears, and form a retreat for animals and birds. The Boers took up their position among the rantzes at Boomplats, and availed themselves of the cover afforded by their irregularities to secure themselves from the fire of the British troops, which were deployed on the plain. As they were beaten from one elevation, they took refuge in another, and when they were finally dislodged, after four hours' sharp fighting, the British loss exceeded theirs by at least four times.

On Monday morning we shook the dust of Boomplats off our feet, and started on our way. Just before setting off, the farmer came out to inspect our horses, and vouchsafed a "gut morgen" in answer to our salutations. The first ten miles lay across another plain studded all over with anthills.

Anthills form a prominent feature in the landscape in South Africa, and make it look as if it were troubled with warts. They stand from two to three feet in height, and are made of soil puddled into clay by the laborious efforts of the ants. When dry the clay makes a hard coherent mass, and it is largely used throughout the country for floors. Many of the hills have holes in the side, hollowed out by the "aardvaark," earth hog, or ant eater. This animal only appears at night, and, though judging from appearances, there must be a good many in the country, I do not remember a white settler who had ever seen one.

We saw several herds of springbok and blesbok after leaving Boomplats. The blesbok is a larger and clumsier antelope than the springbok. Its head looks almost too heavy for its body, and it never takes long leaps like the springbok. It is easily distinguished, even at a distance, from the latter animal on account of its darker colour. When feeding, the springbok and blesbok mingle indiscriminately together; but if an alarm is sounded they separate into distinct flocks, which go off in different directions. R had several shots at them but without success.

We arrived at half-past two at a Lutheran mission

station, called Bethanie. There was a store, a few houses, and a large red-brick church surmounted by crosses. We got some forage for the horses and tried to procure some bread for ourselves. Everybody was out of it, and we should have had to have done without if the parson had not taken compassion upon us, and found us half a loaf from his private stock. We left Bethanie at half-past three, and at length reached our stopping place for the night, at a farm called "Nooit Gedacht," belonging to Mr. H, an Englishman, where we found a different reception to what we had experienced at Boomplats. Mr. H came out to greet us, and on our asking whether we might outspan, he at once acceded to our request, telling us to choose our own place. He then invited us in to supper, and while the meal was preparing he took us to see his farm buildings. He bred horses, cattle and sheep, and had the finest set of kraals I saw anywhere in the Free State. He told us his farm comprised 24,000 acres. He did not exactly know how many sheep he had, but he supposed about 15,000. He had, besides, numerous horses and a large herd of cattle. None of his stock, not even the horses, got any artificial food. They had all to live on the veld. He said he was independent of droughty seasons, his farm being well supplied with water from the Kaffir river which intersected it. Mr. H's house was a superior one. It was only one-storey high, but the rooms were lofty and well-proportioned, and most of them had boarded floors. A shady verandah ran across the front and back, and there was a garden filled with gaily-coloured flowers in front. Mr. H told us



DUTOITSPAN DIAMOND MINE.

he had done all the interior plastering and joinery himself. He was his own glazier and carpenter. A man who lives on a farm up-country in South Africa must help himself, for he will find no one else to help him. Mr. H said he had been waiting three years to get a plasterer from Bloemfontein to come over and stucco the front of the house for him!

Not far from the house was a "fontein" of clear fresh water, which Mr. H said had never been known to fail in the severest drought. It was this fontein which had induced him to purchase the farm many years ago, at the time of the British occupation of the country. He said when he first commenced farming, he had to have fires lighted round his waggons at night to keep off the lions, and game of all sorts was so abundant that he could hardly see the grass at times for them. Now there is not a lion within five hundred miles, and the springbok occur only at intervals, other large game being unknown.

Mr. H's career had been an interesting one. He came over when a little child with a party of settlers to the Eastern Province; and he had served actively in two or three Kaffir wars. He was with Sir Harry Smith's army at the battle of Boomplats; and he assisted at the crossing of the Orange River. I asked his opinion of the giving up of the Orange Free State territory to the Boers by the British. He considered the act foolish in itself and unjust to the farmers who had taken farms in the country on the understanding that they should receive protection. He said very few of his Boer friends wished to be deprived of the shelter

of the British troops and to be left at the mercy of the Basutos. There was, however, no help for it, and now that the Basutos had been put down without British help, he hardly wondered at the Boers turning a deaf ear to the nation which deserted them in their time of need. Mr. H himself, notwithstanding his acclamations against the short-sighted policy of the Colonial office was thoroughly British in his sympathies, and would gladly live once more under the shadow of the old flag.

In the morning before we departed, Mr. H took us to see his garden, and pressed upon us a quantity of fruit. He said he was going to drive into Bloemfontein later on in the day with one of his daughters, who was going to school at the Dames-Institut. During my stay in the Free State, I visited his house again on two several occasions, and each time I experienced the same warm and cordial hospitality which greeted us on first outspanning there.

We left rather late, and drove over a series of gradually ascending plains till we reached Kaffir River, where we outspanned for breakfast. Our meal was fit for a king, being composed of Namaqua partridges, and ripe luscious peaches from the heavily laden trees at Nooit Gedacht, washed down with "Bass." We outspanned a second time in the afternoon to give the horses a roll, and while we were at the outspan, Mr. H passed us on his way to Bloemfontein in a cart with four horses. Near our stopping place was the carcass of a horse, with a crowd of vultures on and around it. Some

of the filthy birds were half buried in the body of the animal, hugging and tearing at its vital parts. The ground around was covered with birds flapping about with extended wings, and fighting for the daintier morsels of flesh. On a small eminence in the neighbourhood, some fifty or more of the creatures sat gorged to repletion, waiting till their digestive organs were capable of receiving further supplies. Vultures, or "aasvogels," as they are called in Cape Dutch, are necessary and useful animals; but they are most repulsive, and the stench is simply disgusting. Mr. Layard, in his book on South African birds, says he could never find anybody courageous enough to skin him a specimen. I do not wonder.

About two hours after leaving our last outspan, we reached the much desired Bloemfontein. The first part of it visible was the small fort erected by the English during the time they occupied the country, and which was left as a legacy to the Boers. It stands on the summit of a long low ridge, which forms one boundary of the town. The road runs over the ridge by the side of the fort. When we reached the foot of the little ascent leading up the ridge, Jacob solemnly inspected the horses to see that everything was in order. He then donned the coat, which he only used on state occasions, and cracking his whip energetically drove us up the hill. As soon as we reached the top he put on steam, and taking us down the main street, and over the little spruit or stream which bisects the valley, in slashing style, pulled up at the doors of the Free State Hotel.

## CHAPTER VI.

### BLOEMFONTEIN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

I MADE Bloemfontein my head quarters during the remainder of my stay in South Africa. It is situated well in the centre of the Free State, and not far from the dividing point of the waters flowing in opposite directions into the Orange and Vaal rivers. The height above sea level has never been exactly ascertained, but from a comparison of several observations with different aneroids, and with a hypsometer, I should be inclined to place it about 4,700 feet.

The town is placed between a kop and a kopjie. On one side is a hill with a flat, long top, covered with patches of bush; and on the other a small irregular elongated ridge. Between the two there is a spruit, or watercourse, which is generally dry. The "fontein" from which the town derives its name is in the upper part of the spruit. It was originally named after a Boer called Bloem. There is a dam above the fontein, which supplies the gardens with water. The town is divided by the spruit into wet and dry "erven;" that is to say, the "erven," or blocks of property into which the town is cut up, are irrigated on one side of the spruit, but not on the other. The principal residential properties and gardens are on the wet erven. The

Market Square and most of the places of business are on the other side of the spruit. The highest point of the little boundary ridge is crowned by the small fort mentioned in the last chapter. It is a primitive fortification, and would be of little use even against Kaffirs. There are one or two guns in it, served by a small artillery corps of about fifty men—the standing army of the State. Either from patriotic or economical motives, they wear an orange coloured corduroy uniform, which, however serviceable, has a rusty and unmilitary appearance.

The most striking building in the town is the Hall where the Volksraad, or Assembly, meet. It is the standing wonder of the country, and every stranger is called upon to admire it. Really, it is a stuccoed building of no great architectural pretensions, with a corrugated iron roof. The great feature in the eyes of the inhabitants is a central tower and a clock, which, being the only public clock up-country, is regarded with a proper reverence.

The next prominent buildings are the English Cathedral and the Bishop's Palace. The so-called Cathedral is not larger than a small village church in England. Part of it is of stone or brick, covered with plaster, and part of wood, with the usual ugly iron roof. Adjoining it is the Bishop's Palace (save the mark !) a pretty brick cottage roofed with thatch. Bloemfontein is well off for religious edifices. There is a Dutch Reformed Church, which was being rebuilt during my stay ; an English Wesleyan Church, a modest, but well proportioned brick building, in the Gothic style, with a high

pitched roof; a German Lutheran Church; and a Roman Catholic Chapel. There are also native churches for the several denominations. The natives are not allowed to worship with the superior race in the Free State. If a black man were to enter a white church, he would probably be taken off to the "tronk," or jail, for his unheard-of presumption. Theoretically the position the Free States occupy with reference to the natives is indefensible on the ground of all Christian precepts; but practically I am bound to say I was not sorry for the prohibition. My olfactory nerves may be somewhat sensitive, but I am afraid if I had to occupy the same building for an hour with eighty or a hundred natives I should be in a very unfit state for hearing a sermon patiently. Even philanthropy must give way before a very bad smell.

The streets are not planted with trees like some other up-country towns I saw afterwards. There are several gardens, with blue-gum, and fig, and other trees on that side of the town which gets water from the dam, and there are one or two trees of imposing appearance on the other side. On the whole, however, the town, as compared with other South African towns, and particularly with Potchefstrom and Pretoria, is defective in foliage. The majority of the buildings are one-storied, and of the square, squat, Dutch style. There are, however, a few built of brick with high pitched roofs, which break the monotony in a pleasant manner. There are about forty stores in the place, one or two of considerable size. The town is very well off for

accommodation for travellers, there being three hotels—the Free State Hotel, where we stayed, the Bloemfontein, and the Central. The Free State Hotel has a good bar, as a matter of course, and a decent dining-room, but the bedrooms are not up to the mark. There is only one public sitting room, which is also used as a smoke room, and it was hardly endurable in the colder weather on account of the absence of a fireplace. The stoep in front of the hotel is, or was, without a protecting roof, and as it received the full rays of the mid-day sun it could only be used for sitting upon in the morning and evening. The Bloemfontein Hotel had a good reputation. It had a covered stoep, which was cooler and more comfortable than that attached to the other hotel. The bedrooms were pretty much like those at the Free State. There was a fireplace in the sitting room, in which, during the winter, coal was burned—coal from the Free State! The third hotel, the Central, is some distance from the others, and is smaller. Some English ladies, staying there for their lungs, gave it a good character. The charge at the Free State Hotel was half-a-guinea a day, including coffee in the morning, three meals, bed, and attendance. The feeding was satisfactory both as regarded quality and quantity, but liquors were dear. Bass was half-a-crown a bottle. A soda-water and brandy cost one shilling and ninepence. Claret was eight shillings a bottle, and champagne a guinea. Tea was served up with all the meals. Milk was procurable by specially ordering it, at prices varying, accord-

ing to the season, from sixpence to eighteenpence a quart bottle. I must ask the reader to pardon these minute details, which, however trivial, will not be without interest to invalids contemplating a residence in Bloemfontein.

The spruit which intersects the town, though generally dry, becomes in wet weather sufficiently full to present a formidable obstacle to locomotion. It is crossed by two or three hand bridges, placed at a considerable height above the bed. They have, nevertheless, been carried away once at least.

Although Bloemfontein is the capital of a Dutch Republic, the prevailing language is English. More than half the population is composed of English and Germans. The two newspapers have English titles, and a considerable proportion of their contents is printed in English. One of the papers is decidedly English in tone, and openly advocates British interests. The other is supposed to be animated by anti-English sentiments, but, so far as I could see, the opposition existed more in theory than in practice. At the time of the annexation of the Transvaal, the then editor, a German, wrote an abusive article, in which he used some rather strong terms. Some of the young English of the place considered the national dignity insulted, and by way of vindicating the outraged majesty of their country solemnly burnt the offending editor in effigy. During the burning, not a person, either Dutch or German, lifted up his little finger against the riotous proceedings, and shortly afterwards the obnoxious editor departed to take service under the Government of Cape Colony!

Ecclesiastical differences are as rife in Bloemfontein as in the old country. The authorities at the Cathedral are "high" in their notions, and refuse to have anything to do with the other Protestant denominations. They have their own schools, their own sisterhood, and their own hospital. Shortly before I left Bloemfontein for good, the foundation-stone of the new Dutch Reformed Church was laid by the President. The German Lutherans and the English Wesleyans assisted in the ceremony, but the Anglican clergy declined to countenance the erection of the wicked building. The Anglican Sisterhood is rather a subject for joking among the English residents, most of the sisters managing to get married soon after taking to conventual life. The Bishop of Bloemfontein is personally popular. He is energetic, and has done a great deal for the welfare of the town. He is reputed not to be quite so straightbacked in his notions as some of the other clergy.

The Wesleyan Church has drawn off all the Churchmen dissatisfied with the proceedings at the Cathedral. It comprises also a sprinkling of Evangelical Dissenters not belonging to the Wesleyan body, and some members of the Presbyterian communities of Scotland. It is, consequently, more cosmopolitan in tone than it would be if it were in England, and fraternises with the Lutherans and the Dutch Reformed Church.

The latter body is supported by the State. In Bloemfontein, the members are not at all disposed to be aggressive, and do not appear to question

the supremacy which the English Church arrogates to itself. The tenets of the Reformed Church are Calvinistic.

The ecclesiastical strife has been productive of good in the foundation and maintenance of schools. The English Church has a grammar school for boys in connection with it, and the ladies at the convent conduct a girl's school. In opposition, the three other Protestant denominations have started boy's and girl's schools of an undenominational character. The Roman Catholics have also a girl's school. All these schools are of the highest character, and have proved a great boon. Pupils are even sent to them from the Diamond Fields and the Transvaal. I believe they will exercise a most important bearing on the future of the country. The young Boers, who come to them, depart with more extended ideas and a taste for cleanliness and culture, which must tell in their homes. There is no doubt also they are infusing an English sentiment into the rising generation, which will not be without its influence when the confederation of South Africa comes more to the fore.

The front of the Free State Hotel looked out upon the Market Square. A market was held every morning, at which the market master, a municipal official peculiar to South African towns, sold produce for all comers at a fixed rate. Until 9 a.m. the market place presented an animated appearance. On Saturdays, particularly, it used to be filled with ox waggons laden with fruit, vegetables, skins, or other produce, the patient oxen sitting or standing in long

rows waiting the time of their master, and chewing the cud in a reflective manner, while the black "foreloopers" or "forerunners" squatted with equal patience in the dust. After market, the square became deserted, except by dogs and calves, which were always visible, and which apparently belonged to nobody in particular. Occasionally the monotony would be broken by a couple of natives walking on opposite sides of the place, and carrying on a conversation in elevated tones with huge "haw haws" of laughter. Sometimes a black would enliven his walk by singing in a high key or playing on a jews-harp, or on the peculiar instrument mentioned some pages back. The costume of the natives was remarkable. They were all required to be dressed within the town limits. Most of them had on some ragged European garment. On Sunday they were absolutely gorgeous. I remember seeing one man in an old orthodox top hat, with a large white collar and gaily coloured print breeches, for all the world like a Christy minstrel. He was, however, very solemn and dignified, as befitted a well-dressed gentleman on his way to church. I have seen some with red and blue legs to one pair of trousers, and others with collar boxes for hats. The native liking for smart colours, the smarter the better, is irresistible. Give a Basuto or Kaffir a cast-off tie, or a moral pocket handkerchief, in brilliant red or blue, and he becomes your friend for ever.

The natives are not allowed to live in the town, but reside in a "location" assigned to them outside it. At nine at night a bell is rung and any native

found in the town after that time without permission is carried off to the tronk. They are supposed not to be able to obtain any drink without a permit, but in reality they get it without stint ; the stuff usually sold to them is "Cape smoke," which they prefer, because it makes them drunk quicker than anything else.

The President of the Republic, Mr. Brand, resides at Bloemfontein. I had introductions to him, which procured for me the pleasure of an invitation to dinner. He is a most courteous and agreeable man, and is very popular with all the residents, English as well as Dutch. The present prosperity of the Free State is in a great measure due to his wise and politic administration. When I dined with him, he had recently returned from a visit to England, where he had been to see the Colonial Secretary about the annexation of the Diamond Fields. I was glad to find he was pleased with the reception he had met.

We had an interesting conversation about his career. He was educated as a lawyer, first at Leyden University, and then at one of the Inns of Court, by which he was called to the English Bar. He showed me with pardonable pride the Latin thesis he composed when his degree was conferred upon him at Leyden. He practised for some time at the Cape Bar, and was for a period Law Lecturer in Capetown, before he accepted the Presidency of the Free State. I avoided talking politics with him, and I think he was grateful for my reticence. He amused me by a story of a celebrated English literary man who had visited Bloemfontein a short

time before, and who was taken to see the President. He had hardly shaken hands before he blurted out the question—"Well, Mr. Brand, and what do you think of the Confederation question?" "Of course," said Mr. Brand, with something like a chuckle, "I answered him."

The President has a numerous and healthy looking family who appeared to speak English among themselves, though, perhaps, that might have been out of compliment to me. I have been pleased to hear, since my return to England, that Mr. Brand has been re-elected President of the Republic. The ultra-English opinion in Bloemfontein is that the Free State will hold together so long as Mr. Brand presides over it, but that after him will come the deluge.

I also had a letter of introduction to Dr. Exton, a gentleman who is recognised among ornithologists as the ornithologist of the Free State, and who is so well known that it would be idle to affect to disguise his name under the cover of initials. He is also a keen sportsman, and we had several expeditions together in the neighbourhood of Bloemfontein. We put our horses up for sale soon after our arrival, but the bidding was so bad that we withdrew them, and they had to remain at the Free State Hotel eating their heads off. We found out now that we had brought our coals to Newcastle; in other words, we had brought horses into a horse breeding country.

The summer rains set in about ten days after our arrival very much to the delight of the whole of the

population, who had been anxiously on the look out for the long deferred blessing. Except the one day at Vlak Kraal, we had had no rain during the whole of our drive up-country. The first day of the rain was only showery at Bloemfontein, but a terrific storm must have been raging in the neighbourhood. We could hear no thunder, but for about two hours the lightning in the distance was perfectly continuous, making the horizon vivid with red, blue, and yellow light.

The first experience of the effects of the storm was gained during an attempt to visit the farm of an English gentleman to the north of Bloemfontein. We drove out in the waggon for the purpose after tiffin. We had with us Mr. B the owner of the farm, a Scotch gentleman, and Dr. Lawton, an English medical man. Both the latter gentlemen had bad lungs like myself, and were staying at Bloemfontein for their health. Dr. Lawton was by far the worst of the party. He afterwards became my companion in a trip to the Transvaal. The visit to the farm was not without incident, and I propose to close this chapter by giving an account of it. About two miles from the town we crossed a narrow spruit more like a broad ditch than a stream, but which, small as it looked, had all but drowned the Archdeacon of Bloemfontein on an occasion when it was swollen with rain. It had been accordingly christened Archdeacon Spruit. The next spruit we came to was called Rhenoster Spruit; there was a nasty, precipitous drift, and a strong stream, but there did not appear to be sufficient water to render crossing it dan-

gerous. I did not, however, sufficiently estimate the dangers of the innocent looking stream, for shortly after Dr. Lawton and Mr G, the Scotch gentleman had a most narrow escape of their lives at this very drift, as will be related further on. After we had got across, also, Mr. B told us that a white gentleman, and a native boy in his employ had been drowned there only fifteen months before. They were in a Scotch cart, which was upset by the rush of water. The white man could swim, but the black caught at him and pulled him under. None of the natives would touch the bodies, and Mr. B had himself got them out, and buried them at a place he pointed out to us. This was reassuring, the more especially as he knew we had to cross Modder River, or Mud River, a tributary of the Vaal, before reaching Mr. B's house. Presently, after emerging from a "poort" between two hills, we saw a line of trees in a valley below us, and driving down the hill side we found ourselves on the banks of the river, which, as usual in South Africa, was not itself visible till we came right upon it. To our chagrin, there was fifteen or twenty feet of water running down like a mill race, and apparently rising. By way of illustrating the rapid way in which rivers rise and fall in the country, I may mention that there was a man with an ox waggon outspanned on the bank, who told us he had crossed that morning at eleven. He had some other waggons on the opposite side, but before he could get a second one over, the water came "down" and cut him off from them. While we were looking at the water,

the proprietor of the canteen on the opposite bank came down, and shouted to Mr. B to send him a newspaper across. He had a black boy with him who, at his orders, plunged down the steep muddy bank, and swam across for the paper. Directly he touched the water, he was carried off like a cork, but by careful steering he landed on our side a long distance below the point he jumped in at. For a few moments I thought it was all over with him, but he did not seem to think he had done any particular feat, and was made quite happy by a small coin we gave him. Shortly afterwards he swam back again with the paper tied to his woolly head. For my own part I felt as if I would not have trusted the life of any man, black or white, to the seething, tumultuous torrent for a thousand papers.

Mr. B had himself been in peril from Modder River. Whilst trying to rescue another man, he was carried away, and was taken out of the water senseless. He described to us his sensation as the water closed over him, and he felt his powers forsaking him. His story made us anxious to return before Rhenoster Spruit rose and cut us off, and as soon as the horses were sufficiently rested, we inspanned and set off on our return journey. We crossed the spruit just before sundown, finding it, to our comfort, quite passable. The rest of the journey was in the dark. We lost our way once or twice. The night was pitch dark, and we had to proceed very slowly for fear of an upset. We were all glad to see the lights of Bloemfontein again.

The dangers of travelling in South Africa from swollen rivers can hardly be over-estimated. Fully one half of the accidents which take place arise from this cause. A careful driver always makes it a maxim to cross a river, when passable, before outspanning, and to outspan on the opposite side, however tired his oxen or horses may be. There may not be a cloud in the sky, and yet before morning the river may have changed from a puddle to a torrent, the result of a storm miles away. The neglect of one day may perhaps result in a delay of two or three weeks, since so long as the river remains "up," nothing can be done but to sit and twiddle the thumbs, till no water comes.

Next morning we made a fresh start. We left at half-past ten, so as to have plenty of time to get back, in case a return should be necessary. We found a mere patch of water in Rhenoster Spruit. When we came to the river, we were delighted to discover that it was quite passable. In the short space of less than twenty hours, the fifteen or twenty feet had sunk down to four. The banks were covered with a thick deposit of mud, which indicated the reason for the name of the river. Two of our party remained in the waggon, but the rest of us got out, so as to lighten the horses' load as much as possible, and crossed on an ox waggon which happened to be going over. Our waggon went across first, and we watched the horses floundering up to their bellies in the thick mud, as they slid down the sides of the drift. At the bottom, the waggon slewed round in a hole, and there would

have been an upset, but for the good generalship of Jacob. The ox waggon got through all right, but stuck in the mud half-way up the opposite bank, leaving us to contemplate the delightful prospect of having to wade through the thick incrustation. But the drivers commenced shrieking and swearing in double Dutch, and lashed the oxen with such fury that at length, with a frantic effort, they succeeded in pulling the waggon out of the mud.

We dined at the canteen on dried fish and tinned salmon, for which we were charged two shillings each. We then inspanned, and soon after reached Mr. B's house. Mr. B was a bachelor, and his house was a fair sample of a bachelor's quarters up-country. It was a small one-storied building, with a thatched roof. It was divided internally in the Dutch style, and contained a voor-huis, or parlour, opening directly on to the open air, a kitchen, and two or three bedrooms, which, in this instance, were supplemented by a second parlour, or dining room, connected with the kitchen. There was a feature in connection with the house very unusual on Boer homesteads, namely, a magnificent garden. Mr. B went in for market gardening, and when the rivers between him and Bloemfontein allowed it, was in the habit of supplying the market there with produce. He made a very lucky *coup* during the early days of the Diamond Fields. He heard that the diggers were short of vegetables, and he took a waggon-load of cabbages to Kimberley for sale. At that time vegetables were hardly to be had for love or money, and, in fact, the Kimberley people were eating weeds

on the veld with their meat. The cabbages sold readily at seven-and-sixpence a-piece, and when Mr. B had cleared out all his vegetables, he found himself with upwards of three hundred pounds in his pocket. He sent a second load as soon as he could get back, but the news of the lucky venture got abroad, and the cabbage trade became fashionable.

The garden was crammed with fruit. The very hedges were formed out of fig and quince trees. There was such a profusion of peaches that they could not all be gathered, and they were lying rotting on the ground in all directions. The fruit attracted many brilliant plumaged birds, and, also, as we found to our trouble, many flies. The garden was irrigated from a fountain of beautiful water near the house. Below the fountain there was a small watercourse lined with reeds, which formed a shelter for innumerable red and yellow reed birds. Their curious nests were placed in various parts of the reeds. They are woven or plaited from the leafy filaments of the reeds in such a way that they give on pressure without breaking. They are attached to two or three neighbouring reeds, and as the latter are blown about by the wind, the nests wave gracefully to and fro with them. The entrance is from below. I cut away one of the nests, which I brought home with me. It is now in the British Museum. During my journey it got accidentally squeezed perfectly flat, but a very little adjustment brought it into shape again. There were also some of the bottle-shaped pendulous' nests of one of the weaver birds hanging to the

trees on the margin of the water-course. The nests are placed on the extreme ends of the branches, so that on attempting to get at them the branch dips towards the water. In this way the birds baffle even the baboons, who are the most ingenious of egg lovers.

We stayed three or four days at Mr. B's. R and he went out shooting buck, and Dr. Lawton and I strolled about watching the small birds, and amusing ourselves in a quiet way. The third day after we had been at the farm, it was arranged to make up a party and accompany Mr. G, who was about to start home, *viâ* Natal, as far as Winburg. He and Dr. Lawton had left all their things at Bloemfontein, and they went to fetch them, getting a neighbouring Boer, named Rensburg, to drive them over for that purpose. After their departure we went out on a sporting expedition. Our first proceeding was of a very unsportsmanlike character, being to blow up some fish, in the Kaffir River, with dynamite. Let no fisherman in England hold up his hands in holy horror. There is a great difference between England, where people fish for sport, and South Africa, where they fish entirely for the stomach. Besides, the inland fish of South Africa are so full of bones that they deserve "dynamiting."

After providing our boys with a splendid feed of fish, we went after korhaan, and made a capital bag. The korhaan in the Free State were smaller than those in the colony, being black and white, instead of mottled. We then turned our attention to the springbok, and R got several shots. We were

obliged to return post-haste in consequence of a storm. We saw it coming some time before it reached us, by the enormous clouds of dust it drove before it. The *causa causans* of the dust was a strong blast of wind, which almost blew the cart over. We raced to the house, and got to it just as the rain began to pour. In a few minutes it was coming down not in drops but in torrents. Rain is rain, up-country. Nobody carries an umbrella against rain, because the greater part of the year it is fair, and when it does rain, even a gig umbrella would be no shelter, and would probably be blown or beaten into shreds. If a man is caught on the veld by a storm, he gets into his waggon, if he has one; if he is on horseback, he off-saddles, and sits with the saddle over his head; if he has no waggon and no saddle, he is—unfortunate.

The following day was wet, and we spent it in battling against the flies, whose appetites seemed invigorated by the rain, and in indulging in speculations as to the non-arrival of Mr. G and Dr. Lawton.

The second day after their departure we went out hunting springbok in our six-horse waggon. Larney was sent out on a horse to drive the game round, and we raced like lunatics, in our heavy waggon, across the veld in pursuit of them. Jacob steered us clear of the ant-heaps and holes in a wonderful manner. The veld is honeycombed with holes made by various species of ichneumons. The one principally seen is known as the meerkat. It is a lively little creature about as big as a squirrel, but thinner

and longer in the body. When it sees anybody approaching, it scampers off towards its hole with great alacrity, but just when it reaches the mouth, curiosity overcomes fright, and it suddenly elevates itself in a sitting position, its tail upright behind its back, and its little eyes peering in every direction; then another movement—a whisk of the tail—and, like Jack-in-the-box, it is gone. There is another kind, known as the rooikat, whose skin is highly prized for making karrosses, the wearing of which is supposed to be efficacious in rheumatic complaints. The holes made by these little creatures are frequent sources of upset, and occasionally of broken limbs, when riding across the veld. Only up-country horses can find their way at a gallop safely through the holes and between the numerous ant-hills which stud the plain.

On our way home we met an ox waggon. Mr. B asked one of the boys who was with the waggon how Modder River was. One asks after rivers up-country as solicitously as about the weather at home. The boy said both the river and the spruit were up, and that a cart had been upset in the latter. Further questions elicited that the cart belonged to a Boer named Rensburg, but we could get no other information. We hastened our journey home, and as we neared Vlak Fontein we saw an ox waggon with a damaged and dirty cart behind it. Rensburg was with the waggon, very drunk. A friend who accompanied him, and was also in liquor but not quite so far gone, told us no lives had been lost, but we did not learn the correct facts until afterwards.

It appeared that Mr. G and Dr. Lawton got safely to Bloemfontein. They went to the hotel to pack up, but before doing so they rather foolishly paid Rensburg for the hire of the car. He went off and got drunk on Cape smoke. When he returned to the hotel after an hour's delay to take them up, they saw he was tipsy, but they thought there would be no risk, and they knew we were waiting for them. Shortly after starting, the Boer produced a bottle of the detestable liquor, and proceeded to get more drunk. When they arrived on the banks of Rhenoster Spruit, some men belonging to a waggon outspanned on the bank, shouted to them to stop, as the spruit was full. Rensburg, with the reckless violence of a drunkard, immediately whipped his horses into a gallop, and drove them right into the water, which was running down in a furious stream. The cart was upset and carried down the spruit. Lawton sprang out and swam to shore. Mr. G got entangled with the reins, and would have been drowned, but for two Kaffirs belonging to the waggon, who rescued him. The owner of the waggon, an Englishman, at the risk of his own life, pulled the Boer out by the hair of his head senseless, and at the last gasp. One of the horses was drowned. The first thing Rensburg did on regaining his senses was to show his gratitude to his deliverer by cursing and swearing at him for only saving one of the horses. The cart belonged to Mr. B, and was broken and damaged. All the effects of the travellers went down the stream along with some of mine, including my photographic chemicals and my

diary. They were fished out subsequently from the mud, and after each page of the diary had been dried separately in the sun, it became readable. The cart was pulled out by oxen, and it and the damaged goods came to Vlap Fontein, while Mr. G and Dr. Lawton returned to Bloemfontein. The latter gentleman was just recovering from a sharp attack of pleurisy, but strange to say, he took no harm from his immersion.

As soon as the waters permitted, we returned to Bloemfontein. Mr. G had had enough of the Natal route home; and shortly afterwards he departed in the other direction, *viâ* Port Elizabeth.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE DIAMOND FIELDS.

As we could not dispose of our horses at Bloemfontein, we resolved to take them to the Diamond Fields to see if we could effect a sale there. We were told we should probably get a better price at Kimberley, and we were anxious to see the Fields.

We left Bloemfontein on the Tuesday following our return from Vlak Fontein, at half-past eleven. We had another boy in the place of Larney, who left us just before we started. He and Jacob had not got on well together lately. Jacob had taken to drinking at Bloemfontein, and he was quarrelsome in his cups. Larney's mode of leaving was characteristic. Instead of giving us a straightforward notice, he invented a wife and children in Capetown, and brought us a neatly written letter from his imaginary wife, saying she was very bad, and entreating him to return. This dodge failing, he next tried to deceive us with a story of a Malay at the Diamond Fields, who had a vendetta against him, and who would assuredly give him "knife" if he saw him. Ultimately we had to let him off, and he immediately took advantage of his dismissal to go courting a Hottentot girl who had taken his fancy. He was not a bad servant, despite his lies. It does not answer to be too particular in South Africa.

There are two or three roads to the Diamond Fields from Bloemfontein. We took the coach road, which goes a little out of the way to catch the small town of Boshof *en route*. The rains had covered the once dry and parched veld with a carpet of long, luxuriant grass. The first few days of the renewed growth of grass were very beautiful. Immediately after the first shower, tiny, emerald green blades began to show themselves, and grew with a rapidity which gave one the idea of seeing them grow. The young grass was mixed with beautiful flowers, which perfumed the air with a thousand fragrant scents. As the grass grew bigger, it grew ranker and darker in hue, and the flowers became rarer. When we drove to the Diamond Fields, it had attained to a considerable height, reaching in places above my hips, and forming an excellent cover for game.

Our road ran past the Bloemfontein Kop, a small conical hill, which forms a landmark for travellers approaching the town from the west. We drove along the ordinary bullock road as far as a farm, where we outspanned for a short time. The coach road diverged from the bullock road a little beyond the farm. It led us over a flat plain, covered with long herbage and stocked with korhaan, to a ford on the Modder River, known as Truter's Drift. There was a fair inn near the drift where we put up for the night. The price of Bass's beer was five shillings the bottle!

We crossed the drift in the morning soon after six o'clock, and shortly afterwards found ourselves on the yellow soil, which is characteristic of the

Diamond Fields region. During the morning we saw the first "pan." It was a circular depression in the veld, not unlike a frying pan buried up to the edges in the ground. It was lined with saline incrustations, and there was a little brack water in the centre. These "pans" are common in the desert country in the north-western part of Cape Colony. One of them in the Calvinia District, called the Great Commissioner's Pan, is ten miles in length. The salt is an article of commerce. We outspanned to let the horses have a roll, but there was nothing in the neighbourhood eatable by us, or by them. Soon after inspanning, we emerged on to a plain covered with our old friend "bush" instead of grass. There were blesbok and springbok on it in abundance, and R got several shots.

We outspanned for breakfast at mid-day at a farm called by the now familar name of Rietfontein. It swarmed with flies, and we were glad to get away after an hour's halt.

At four o'clock we reached Boshof. It was a small, straggling, unkempt looking village. There was a market square, in which a market was held when anybody came with anything for sale. Although rejoicing in a municipality and a landrost, or stipendiary magistrate, it would hardly be known to fame, were it not for the passengers by the Diamond Fields coach having to pass a night there. The coach came while we were at the hotel, and we had a large *table d'hôte* in consequence. After dinner I had a talk with some gold diggers from Pilgrims Rest, in the Lydenburg district, in the

Transvaal. They said there was plenty of gold, but neither labour to work nor water to wash it with. The gold is found in alluvial soil, in which are imbedded huge boulders, which have to be removed.

I had several conversations with gold diggers during my stay in the country, and almost one and all united in saying that under present circumstances, digging gold does not pay in the Transvaal. Since Sekukuni's invasion the gold fields in the Lydenburg district have been deserted.

We left Boshof after breakfast next morning. We outspanned at mid-day in a valley besprinkled with trees. There was a dam of water near the outspan, and we had to pay a shilling for watering our horses at it. They were only allowed to graze within a limited circle. These unusual precautions suggested the nearness of the Diamond city. Indeed we could see it from the trees. Two white streaks appeared on the side and at the summit of a distant ascent, which were respectively Dutoitspan and Kimberley. As we approached nearer, the Kimberley streak resolved itself into mounds of an irregular shape, crowned with scaffolding and machinery, which presently developed into the diamond mine known as De Beers. When we got nearer the mine we found ourselves among dismal-looking iron shanties, intermingled with mud heaps, wells, and washing apparatus, at which Kaffirs and white men were busily working. Driving still forwards, we reached more symmetrically arranged huts or houses. At length we came into a street with houses of a pretentious appearance and stores, but

all of iron. Passing down the street, we turned into another, at side angles to it, and pulled up at Jardine's Hotel. We were in the middle of Kimberley, the richest town in South Africa.

I am bound to say Kimberley needs all its reputation to make it tolerable. It is certainly not an attractive place. The houses are of corrugated iron, which is a material impossible to be made beautiful. It is hot in summer and cold in winter, and disagreeable at all times. The best houses are lined with brick: the brick made in the country will not stand the action of the weather, and can only be used for lining. There is stone in the neighbourhood, but I saw no stone houses. The whole town gives the impression of having been built with the idea of being prepared for removal at a moment's notice. The speculative and temporary nature of the business carried on at Kimberley shows itself all over the place, and naturally determines the appearance of the houses. Nobody talks of living there; nobody thinks of it as a place to live in, but only as a place to make money at, and then get away. There is no time to think about ornament or comfort. Everybody is in a hurry and consequently cares nothing about appearances. The hotel was a curiosity in buildings. It was a large shed—iron, of course—with cabins down the sides, used as bedrooms. An outer room was used as a bar, which was extensively patronised. Besides the bar, the only public room was the shed itself with the little bedrooms on either side, like the saloon of a passenger ship.

The great feature of Kimberley is the Kimberley

mine, *alias* Colesberg Kopjie, alias New Rush. The two latter names are indicative of stages in the past existence of the mine. The site was formerly a gentle rise in the ground. Before the rush to it was made, from which it derives its third name, it had been twice prospected and abandoned. At length diamonds were accidentally discovered, and all the diggers within hail "rushed" it. I was told that the first diamond was found by a lady who was poking about with her parasol. From the beginning, the mine yielded well. Since its discovery in 1871, it is estimated that twelve million pounds worth of diamonds have been taken from it.

It lies at one end of Kimberley, the town being built between it and Old de Beers. The first view is startling. The visitor mounts a slight ascent and suddenly finds himself at the edge of a huge hole in the ground, oblong in shape, and covering about eight acres in area; the hole is two hundred feet deep and is shaped somewhat like a basin. The bottom is carefully parcelled out into squares. The original claims were thirty feet square, and no person was allowed to hold more than one at a time. Since the British occupation, the ordinance limiting the quantity held by one individual has been repealed, and at the present time there are only about two hundred proprietors. The sides and floor of the basin were swarming with blacks working under the superintendence of white men, who watched them with jealous care. There were several thousands at work, looking in the distance like ants. Some were engaged in clearing away a quantity of reef, which

had fallen in from above and covered the claims on one side, and were working in perilous positions on the sides of the mine. Others were digging and picking industriously in the claims below. Round the top were a variety of machines for raising the stuff from the claims. The machinery was of all types, from the most approved steam engines to simple horse whims. From each machine, wire ropes ran to the various claims, up and down which baskets were ascending and descending. Natives were occupied at the machines loading the stuff as it came up into carts. Over them also were white overseers, carefully observant to see that no thieving hands were endeavouring to secrete portions of the precious earth. Everywhere was busy activity. From the misty depths of the mine rose the subdued murmur of conversation, the ring of pickaxe and spade, and the whirr of buckets ascending and descending. Close at hand I could hear the throb of the engines, the thud of earth falling from the buckets into carts, and the cries of the drivers taking away loaded carts, and bringing back empty ones. For the moment, the mine looked like the crater of some extinct volcano filled with the gnomes and ghouls of the old Scandinavian mythology.

The Kimberley mine is the richest piece of soil on the face of the globe. For rating purposes it is valued at more than £2,000,000, and the rating valuation is confessedly below the mark. I was told that some of the claims in particular parts of the mine could be sold readily at any time for seven, eight, or nine thousand pounds each. In the early

days of the mine, roadways were reserved for the purpose of getting at the claims easily; but the soil was too valuable to permit them to remain, and they have been worked away. The daily produce averages £6,000.

Several kinds of rock have been passed through in turning the original hill into a hole; the first stratum was composed of an ochreous kind of earth. When the bottom of this earth was reached, it was thought the bottom of the mine had been struck, and a panic occurred. The cry of "played out" has since been raised several times, but it has always been a false cry. A shaft has been sunk by a digger firm 150 feet below the present bottom, and if, as was reported to me, diamonds were discovered at the lowest depth, there is not much danger of Kimberley mine being played out for some time to come. The rock now worked is known as the "blue rock." It is a loosely-textured rock of a dull blue colour, looking like solidified mud.

At the outset, before the mine was worked to any great depth, the process of working was comparatively inexpensive, and could be engaged in by men with a moderate amount of fortune. Now a very large capital is required, and the mine is gradually falling into the hands of a few large capitalists and companies. The value of any particular claim is pretty well known, and an experienced digger can say almost with certainty that out of so many loads of stuff there will be so much value in diamonds. The disturbing element in the calculations is the so-called floating reef. The floating reef is composed

of veins of hard unproductive rock which traverse the diamondiferous rock in various directions, and which have to be removed in common with it. The expenses of digging, and of removing and washing the earth, combined with the mining rates, are so heavy, that a long continuance of floating reef suffices to wreck any man without a reserve of capital. The claims towards the outside of the mine are also liable to be covered by falls of the surrounding reef, which renders them temporarily unproductive.

The affairs of the mine are managed by a mining Board. The Board clears away the reef which has fallen from the sides, and keeps the mine free from water. Each digger is rated according to the value of his claim or claims, and pays a fixed sum at stated periods to the common fund. He is liable for the rate so long as he occupies a claim, whether it is unproductive or not.

Striking as is the mine in the middle of the day it is still more so by moonlight. Then, under the pale, subdued rays of the luminary of evening, the effect is weird and picturesque to a degree. The depths of the mine are hid in a misty blueness, through which are seen indistinctly the broken forms of the workings below. The wires radiating in all directions towards the edge of the huge hole glisten like spiders' webs in the rays of the moon. The further margin is only dimly suggested, and the scaffolding and machinery around stand out like spectres in ghostly relief. The busy hum of the day is succeeded by intense silence. No movement is visible except when the swarthy figure of a native crosses

the sky-line, looking in the semi-darkness like some messenger from the infernal regions, the entrance to which might well lie in those dark depths below.

When the blue rock reaches the surface it is carted off to patches of ground in the neighbourhood of the mine, where it is spread out and exposed to the action of the sun for a fortnight or three weeks. From time to time it is knocked about and watered. It then becomes disintegrated into small nodules which are still further pulverised and washed in machines provided for the purpose. We inspected the proceedings at one of the washing machines. It was of the latest construction, and was driven by steam power. It consisted of circular drums with interstices of different sizes, and of a trough with revolving teeth, the latter placed horizontally. The stuff was mixed with water and passed through the machine; the drums riddled out the large stones, and the rakes broke up the nodules. The bulk of the water was at the same time drained from the mixture, leaving a creamy plaster behind. When a sufficient quantity of the creamy deposit was collected the machinery was stopped, and the contents of the large trough were taken in buckets to a hand rocking machine, to receive the final wash. The buckets represented the boiling down, as it were, of many cartloads of stuff. The white man, who had been superintending the operations of the black labourers up to this time, now took matters into his own hands. Stooping down over the pans he carefully pried into the corners with his fingers to see that no diamond was by any chance lurking in any part of it. He

then stationed himself at the rocker and commenced rocking it, while the natives poured in bucket after bucket of the precious treacle-like substance. The rocker was furnished with two sieves, one above with large meshes, and a second one below with smaller meshes. As the machine was rocked to and fro the water ran out at the bottom carrying the mere mud with it, but leaving the larger stones in the upper sieve, and the smaller ones, down to the size of a pin's head, in the lower one. The contents of the sieves were then emptied on to a table where an old lady and some children were engaged in sorting. The sorting was effected by spreading a portion of the heap level on the table with a small iron scraper. The diamonds were picked out, and the refuse stones thrown off the table by a turn of the wrist. None of the natives were allowed to approach the table, and on one of them coming up in a careless sort of way, he was knocked down forthwith. Seeing our looks of astonishment, the proprietor told us the native knew very well why he was knocked down. He said the robberies by the native workmen were so frequent, that nothing but the strictest discipline and vigilance prevented the diggers from losing a great part of the reward of their labours. His objections did not, however, extend to us. He observed the interest we took in the proceedings, and asked us whether we would like to find a few diamonds. We accordingly sat down and raked assiduously for half an hour, during which I discovered a lot of what I supposed to be diamonds, the biggest and best of which turned out to be crystals.

The diamonds were of all sorts, from perfect crystallized forms to shattered dirty looking pieces of stone, which it was difficult to recognise as precious gems. They were mixed with crystals of all sorts and colours, which were ruthlessly scraped off the table as valueless, though many of them looked shinier and prettier than the diamonds. The white crystals were like cut diamonds, but the digger pointed out that their edges were rough and sharp, while the real diamonds were slightly rounded and satiny to the touch. During the half hour we were at work, we sorted out amongst us more than £200 worth of diamonds.

The laws against diamond stealing are very severe. Every person buying or selling diamonds must take out a license. No natives are allowed to dig, but they occasionally get permission to sort waste heaps, and to sell the produce, and under cover of the permit many frauds are perpetrated. Illicit diamond dealing is a penal offence punishable with imprisonment or a fine of £500. Up to the time of our visit, white dealers had only been fined, and there were loud complaints that many of the unlawful dealers were willing to risk the chance of discovery for the sake of the great profits. Soon after we left an illicit dealer was sent to prison without the option of a fine, greatly to the satisfaction of the mining community. The natives are great adepts at stealing. They will quietly wait till their boss's back is turned, and then take up a diamond between their toes, and conceal it in the wool on their pates, or even, in case of need, swallow it.

The regular wages of a coloured workman average about £1 per week. He lives on mealie meal porridge, and pays no house rent, like his master. After a few weeks he is rich enough to return home with money to buy cows and wives, and a gun or rifle. The trade in guns was alarming. It was known almost to a certainty that the guns were being bought by Ketchwayo's orders to be used at some future time against the whites, and yet the greed for gain, and the indifference to consequences were so great that scarcely a native left the fields without a gun. I mentioned the subject to several persons, and asked how it was steps were not taken to put an end to the traffic, but I could only get evasive answers, or a shrug of the shoulders. Diamonds were the only subjects of consideration. Vigorous enough steps could be taken to check native trade in them. But the more dangerous trade in guns and rifles was suffered to pass unnoticed. There may have been some laws in force, as in Cape Colony, to check the trade in guns, but if so, they were not enforced. It is melancholy to reflect how many lives of white men have been lost in South Africa through the culpable and reckless sale of firearms at the Diamond Fields. Whether the recent events in Zululand will infuse some sort of conscience into the people at the Diamond Fields or not, is a question; but for their own sakes, as well as for those of the neighbouring colonies, they ought to be more careful.

The Diamond Fields are the great centre of South Africa. Hundreds of miles away in the colony the

traveller meets waggons laden with goods and material toiling onwards from Capetown or Port Elizabeth to Kimberley. Half the Natal traffic also tends in the same direction. Even the phlegmatic Transvaal Boers bring their produce here for sale. The roads leading to the fields are thronged with natives going and returning, some even from the far distant Zambesi. In the Transvaal, we were constantly meeting gangs of Mahowas, Matabili, and other native tribes wending their steps to the capital of precious stones. Representatives of all the South African tribes are to be found there. When we were at Rustenburg, some time after, we visited a native chief who had bought a farm. and who had sent his young men to Kimberley to earn the money to pay for it.

During my visit to Kimberley I visited the other dry diggings. The nearest to New Rush is Old de Beers. It is situated at the other end of the town within sight of New Rush. It is larger in area but presents a very different appearance. Instead of one large hole there is a series of holes of different sizes and depths, with causeways and roads between and among them. De Beers is worked spasmodically, and very few of the workings have reached the blue rock; many were for sale and could be had for an old song. The machinery was more primitive and mixed than at New Rush, there being a medley of man machines, horse machines, and steam machines. De Beers is an uncertain mine: a digger may get a very good diamond, and he may work for weeks without finding sufficient to pay for working.

The mounds round De Beers afford an opportu-

nity for seeing all the dry diggings—Kimberley, Dutoitspan, and Bultfontein. They all lie within half an hour's walk of one another. The Kimberley mine is the property of the Government, who paid £100,000 for it; the others belong to a Company, which grants licenses to work on reasonable terms. When I was at Mr. H's he told me he had been offered the farm on which New Rush stands a few years before the discovery of diamonds there for £600, but did not consider it worth the money.

Dutoitspan and Bultfontein touch one another and practically form one mine. The village of Dutoitspan is situated alongside the mine. Dutoitspan is smaller than Kimberley, and less regularly built, the huts or houses being placed anyhow. Many of the canvass houses which originally formed the town of Kimberley still remain at Dutoitspan. The "Pan," as it is familiarly termed, is much behind Kimberley, and is looked down upon by the diggers at the latter place.

Dutoitspan mine is more like Old de Beers than New Rush; it is, however, more worked than Old de Beers. Bultfontein seemed almost abandoned. Since my return to England two very large diamonds have been discovered in Dutoitspan mine, and probably it has again come into fashion.

It is curious that diamonds should be found in these mines, and not in the immediate or surrounding districts. The diamondiferous area in each is rigidly marked out by the surrounding reef. Within the area diamonds are found without reference to the changes of soil and rock; it is as if diamondiferous plugs had been inserted into the earth at

certain fixed spots. The favourite mode of accounting for the formation of the mines, is that they are craters of extinct volcanos, and this does not seem improbable. But how did the diamonds get there? One or two scientific men have propounded theories of their own, but they have not met with much acceptance among the diggers; one of the scientific theories was that the diamonds were blown there.

The market place in Kimberley is an interesting sight. It is a large square, on one side of which are the various offices of the Government of Griqualand West. Amongst these, I observed a large corrugated iron shed in which the High Court of Justice holds its sittings. The Court was not sitting. In the palmy days of the fields, the Griqualand bar made a great "pile," as the saying goes up-country. Even now, there is plenty of litigation among the diggers, and lawyers seem to do very well. At one corner of the square, is Government House, a low, ugly iron house, with a sentry pacing in front. The market is the largest in South Africa. Produce of all kinds is to be found in it, from all corners of the Free State and Transvaal, some of it coming from places more than a hundred miles away, and all brought in the lumbering ox waggons. The prices are regulated by the supply, and oscillate between dear, and very dear. The article which keeps up its price most continuously is wood for the steam engines, which was selling when we were there at £7 10s. the waggon load, while there is coal near the borders of Zululand to be got for nothing, or next to nothing.

Our horses were sold by auction during our stay at the Fields; they realised £168 10s., harness included. They cost us £233 in Capetown, so that after paying the auctioneer's commission of ten per cent., we found ourselves considerably out of pocket. They had been eating their heads off at Bloemfontein, and at Kimberley forage was at famine prices. We had to pay over £5 for their feed from Thursday afternoon to Saturday morning. The advertisement of sale, which was prepared by the auctioneer, is such a triumph of the advertising art that I take the liberty of presenting a copy of it. It is said of the late George Robins, that he once described a house as only objectionable for two reasons, namely, that the roses covered the paths with litter, and the nightingales kept people awake at night. Even he, however, would hardly have been capable of the eloquence which characterises the production of the Kimberley auctioneer, who kindly evolved new names for the horses out of his prolific inner consciousness. The advertisement is as follows :—

"MR. A. A. ROTHSCHILD'S SALES.

ROTHSCHILD'S TATTERSALL'S,
At 11 o'clock, will be worth visiting.

MR. A. A. ROTHSCHILD,
Auctioneer and Sworn Appraiser,
Duly instructed will Sell
THIS DAY,
At 11 o'clock, at his Tattersall's,
6 LOVELY HORSES AND HARNESS,
Which have been bought under the personal superintendence of

Mr. Bam in Cape Town, and which eclipse in beauty, action, and demeanour anything yet seen in Kimberley.

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LEADERS, CALLED ACHILLES AND HOTSPUR,

Are 2 powerful Horses, with aristocratic action, and gifted with a STEP which would excite the ENVY of every Horse Connoisseur in Rotten Row. They are young, docile, and handsome.

MIDDLE HORSES—ANTELOPE AND PROMPT,

Stand about 16 hands high, well proportioned, fine high stepping action, powerful chests, plucky as the crew on the man-of-wars of the same name (never known to have given in) and only about 6 years old. Oh! What loveliness is concentrated in that amount of Horseflesh!

WHEELERS—EXPRESS AND SWIFTSURE.

A pair of Horses on which any description would fall short. Grand in their proportion, strong as Hercules, swift as a deer, persevering as Standholders, and as full of spirit and pluck as the Kimberley contingent. "Express" and "Swiftsure" were the first that entered the passage of the Dardanelles, and are consequently the pets of every true and loving Englishman.

THE HARNESS

Is in keeping with the Horses, strong, elegant, long enduring, well finished, patent, and good.

WITHOUT RESERVE.

A. A. ROTHSCHILD, AUCTIONEER."

We had some idea of visiting the river diggings in the bed of the Vaal River, but we were told that they were almost entirely deserted, and there was little to see. The early digging was all done along the course of the river, and the first persons who tried to find diamonds away from it were laughed at for their pains. The story of the discovery of diamonds has been told so often that it would be wearisome to recount it. The first diamond was found in the

hands of some children who were playing with it. This occurred in 1869. The dry diggings were not "rushed" in force till 1871, in which year the British Government took possession of Griqualand West. At first the diamondiferous soil was sorted "dry," a system which allowed many valuable stones to escape the eye of the sorter; now all sorting is done with the aid of water, and the man who succeeded to the equity of redemption in the sorted soil would have but a poor inheritance.

There were several riots before the Government was firmly established, but they were soon quieted. The rowdy element was never strong, and at the present time Kimberley is quieter than a manufacturing town of similar size in the north of England. The population, though undoubtedly affected with keen gambling instincts, is thoroughly law-abiding. Many of the white men employed at the diggings are educated, intelligent men, and it is not at all uncommon for the man sitting next you at *table d'hôte* to be an old University man.

After selling the horses, R, who was meditating a hunting trip, took the waggon off my hands and bought a set of oxen for it, with which we returned to Bloemfontein. We found the new mode of progression very slow and tedious at first. We had always gone forty, and sometimes sixty miles a day with our horses, but oxen do a very good day's work if they cover twenty miles. The new span were hardly broken in, and were very wild and unruly; and Jacob did not know so well how to manage them as he did the horses. It will be better to

reserve a description of the mode of inspanning and outspanning and driving till I come to describe my journey to the Transvaal. Meantime I may explain that oxen are driven with a whip and not with reins, and are only allowed to go at a walking pace.

We travelled part of the way by a different road to what we had taken in driving to the Fields, not touching at Boshof. At the first outspan, we had to pay again for water and grass. Not far from it I noticed a number of nests of the sociable weaver bird. One nest was quite a couple of yards in diameter. It had a pent roof, under which was an innumerable colony of birds, which were flying in and out like bees, keeping up a busy twittering all the while. The nests were placed in mimosa trees. The trees were in some rantzes, amongst which the road ran, and which offered a pleasant contrast to the bare treeless country immediately surrounding the Fields. We outspanned for the night about seven, and the oxen were fastened to the disselboom, at which they kept tugging and butting till late on in the night. In the morning they were allowed to graze a little, while our coffee was preparing. One of them got away during the night, and an hour was spent in hunting for it.

We found we were not jolted so much as when behind the horses. The oxen moved at a slow rate, and when we came to a stone we rolled over it, instead of jolting over it as we had been doing. About ten, we left the hills and came to the edge of the plain which we had crossed to go to Boshof, but at a different point. We got to Rietfontein at night,

and by outspanning a safe distance from the house we kept free from the flies.

We were up at five next morning, but the oxen were very troublesome, and we did not get off till nearly seven. We outspanned for breakfast at one of the coach stables. There was no meat to be had at it, and we had to content ourselves with Liebig's Extract, and rancid bacon. The veld all round was swarming with caterpillars. They had eaten the long grass down to within a foot of the soil during the week we had been at the Diamond Fields. I counted as many as three on one blade of grass. They were unfortunately not confined to one locality, but attacked the veld in most parts of the Free State. What with drought, war, and caterpillars, it was a bad year for South Africa.

We got to the Modder River just before dark. There was more water in it than when we crossed it before. We got a black to wade through it, and finding the water did not reach above his chest, we crossed it. The water came through the floor of the waggon, but fortunately did not spoil anything. We slept in the hotel, perhaps luckily, for it rained and blew great guns during the night. There was a waggon near the hotel belonging to some people who were going from Bloemfontein to the Fields. They were driving with mules, which had run away during the night, and they were waiting until they were found. We heard afterwards that they were kept waiting a week.

We outspanned at another stable next morning, which was deserted. Fortunately, we had a tin of

potted lobster, which saved us from entire starvation. The oxen, too, were very wild, and delayed us so much that we did not reach Bloemfontein until half-past six. The first cry was dinner, and it was only after a capacious meal that we were able to talk with equanimity to our Bloemfontein friends of our trip to the Diamond Fields.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### BLOEMFONTEIN TO THE VAAL RIVER.

After our return to Bloemfontein, R and I agreed to separate for a time. He was desirous of going on a purely sporting expedition to the Middle Veld of the Free State, which lies in the corner formed by the Vaal River, as it bends round from the Transvaal to Griqualand West. The country is flat and treeless in that neighbourhood, and consequently uninteresting. R was too ardent a sportsman to care about scenery, but I was debarred by physical reasons from heavy sporting, and did not care to travel through a district where the only attraction was the game. I had for some time wished to visit the Transvaal, and cast about for a companion. I found Dr. Lawton wanted to try the effect of a waggon journey, and we arranged to go together. We determined to travel in an ox waggon, both for reasons of economy and health. Forage still continued dear notwithstanding the rains; and we heard there was a great deal of horse sickness in the Transvaal. Besides we were not bound to arrive at any place in any given time, and it did not matter to us whether we travelled slowly or quickly.

We also resolved to hire a waggon, rather than buy one, with the prospect of finding a white elephant in our hands on our return. It was im-

perative that we should be back before the cold weather set in, more for Dr. Lawton's sake perhaps than mine, he being the greater invalid of the two. We calculated that it would be unadvisable to be away longer than two months, and it was hardly worth while to buy a waggon for such a short time. We experienced great difficulty in securing a light waggon such as we required, but at length Mr. H kindly offered us the use of an eight-horse waggon of his and we were pleased to accept his offer. The waggon was very light for its size, and we found eight oxen would be enough for it. The usual span for a full-sized waggon is sixteen or eighteen. It is necessary to have a reserve of strength in a team over and above the usual daily average, in order to provide for crossing drifts, or ascending hills. Six oxen would have sufficed under ordinary circumstances for our waggon, but we took two additional ones so as to be ready for all emergencies. We bought the oxen, which were trained, for £60 for the span.

While the arrangements for the Transvaal trip were in progress, I paid a flying visit to Mr. H's farm. During the visit I drove with Mr. H to make purchases at Bethanie, the village we had passed through on our way from the Colony to Bloemfontein. The little place was filled with Korannas, who had come to barter small packets of wool for coffee, tobacco, and other things at the comprehensive village stores. Most of them were connected with the Lutheran Mission Station. The missionaries had succeeded in persuading them to give



THE MARKET SQUARE, POTCHEFSTROON.

up their former nomadic habits. Many of them were property owners. The first step in civilisation is to learn the value of property, and of a fixed place of residence. The Korannas present the purest type of the Hottentot race to be found off the Kalihari Desert. The Bethanie Korannas were not inviting to look at; their narrow skulls, flat noses, sallow complexions, and little oblique eyes combined to form a low cunning type of countenance in keeping with their thin and mis-shapen bodies, which were unlike the massive and muscular forms of the Zulus and Kaffirs. It was impossible to remain long to windward of them, and I was glad to retire inside the store, where I got into conversation with a Boer who was distressingly anxious that I should try pounded jackal's liver for my lungs. He said it was sovereign for all lung complaints, and adduced so many examples of its good effects and with such grave solemnity, that I feel compelled to mention it for the benefit of any doctors in England who may be on the look out for a new specific.

I found Mr. H brimful of practical information about the country and its capacities. On our way home he told me the want of water on up-country farms as often as not arose from ignorance of the water-bearing capabilities of the veld. He called my attention to the trap dykes which traversed the country at intervals. "If you dig by the side of a dyke you are very likely to meet with water," Mr. H said, "and if you dig at the intersection of two dykes, you are almost certain to do so." His in-

formation reminded me of the statement of a water engineer in a Parliamentary inquiry at home, which I was present at, that in some of the water-bearing formations, and notably in the new red sandstone in England, there are, as it were, a series of water-bearing boxes divided by retaining walls. Mr. H also pointed out to me the grasses on which sheep thrive the best, and which a casual observer would readily mistake for others on which they would starve. This is part of the practical knowledge without which no one ought to buy a farm up-country, and it is only acquired by experience.

When I got back from Mr. H's, I found R had set off on his excursion to the Middle Veld. The oxen had been very fresh at starting, and ran away with the waggon before leaving Bloemfontein.

Dr. Lawton had purchased most of the provisions and stores in my absence, and we commenced packing the waggon. We took a very miscellaneous lot of things, fully one-third of which turned out to be useless. But live and learn. We had, for instance, a large pot filter, which was too cumbersome and fragile, and we took a sack of sugar, and an enormous tin of tea, which only encumbered the waggon, and which we were glad to get rid of subsequently. We were luxurious enough to take also six dozen bottles of ale and stout, and a number of tins of jam, preserved meat, and the like. All these things so filled the waggon that we could hardly turn round for a few nights. Amongst our other *impedimenta* was a small keg of butter, which was placed in a safe corner by one of the kind friends

who assisted us, and who packed it away so securely, that we did not find it for three weeks afterwards, when, of course, it had gone bad.

The waggon was mounted on springs. Ox waggons proper have no springs, but my experience of up-country roads made me welcome the innovation. There was a driving box in front, and a door behind. Two seats ran down the sides, and a cartel, or framework of wood and hide, on which our mattress was placed, fitted between them. Our goods were stowed under the cartel, and for the first night or two occupied part of it. It was inconvenient to have to remove the mattress and bedding every time we wanted to get at our stores, and I did not like the arrangement. There were some klaps along the side of the waggon-tent which let up and down, and a large klap covered the front at night. From motives of cleanliness, we never permitted the boys to enter the waggon, but attended to all the interior arrangements ourselves. We sat as far removed from our boys as possible, to avoid nasal unpleasantness.

The oxen had been used to pulling together. It is very advisable to travel with beasts which have been trained to one another. Oxen are pig-headed animals, with peculiar likes and dislikes, which they are not slow to show. The idiosyncracies of our span were quite worth a study. One of them was a sour-tempered animal, with a hatred of his species, which he was continually manifesting. His favourite amusement was to poke viciously the ox in front of him, which by reason of its position could not re-

taliate. Like most morose individuals he shirked his work, and required constant adjurations and whippings. Another, a powerful beast, which occupied one of the posts of honour near the pole, was the very antipodes. He always did his best, and preserved his cheerfulness under all circumstances. He had been inoculated in early life for lung sickness, and had lost two-thirds of his tail as a result of the operation. He had a habit of elevating the stump when we were crossing a drift, and the raising of the ragged remnant in the air was always a signal to hold tight. The other oxen had each their little peculiarities which we had plenty of opportunity of studying. The two most powerful oxen in a span are chosen as the "achter," or pole oxen. The fore oxen are specially trained to lead the way, and are generally worth more money than the rank and file. With two really good leaders and powerful achter oxen, it is not necessary to be careful about the others, except to see that they have been inoculated. The most esteemed "trek" oxen are those with short legs, big humps against which to rest the yoke, and large dewlaps. They ought also to be well developed about the hind quarters.

The oxen pull by means of a wooden yoke, one of which is laid across the necks of each couple. The yoke is kept from slipping sideways by wooden stays, or "skeys," which are fastened under the throat by a small "strop" of hide. The several yokes are attached at proper intervals to a chain or rope, one end of which is fastened to the disselboom

of the waggon. The chain is known as the "trek-tow." The oxen are not driven by a rope passing through the nose, as I have seen them in South Italy, but solely by the huge whip which the driver wields, and which in our case was long enough to reach the front oxen from the driving box. It requires quite an apprenticeship to use an ox whip. I tried it one day, but only succeeded in flogging myself, and making my sides sore with the exertion. As the waggon goes lumbering along, the driver keeps up a running fire of threats and entreaties to the oxen, calling them by their names, but more often using bad words than good. The exclamations are interspersed with cracks of the whip, and, if the oxen prove unanswerable to reason, with cuts which makes the hair fly.

We were unfortunate in our choice of a driver. We had to take him at the last moment as a sort of Hobson's choice. He was a sulky-looking half-caste, named Benjamin. The "forelooper," or forerunner, was a Basuto, called Swartboy—*Anglice*, Blackboy. He did not belie his name, for he looked as if he had been dipped in a bottle of blacking, and then polished.

We left in a hurry at the last, as people always do, and forgot part of our bedding, which was supplied by a friend, to whom we were indebted for many acts of kindness, and who was good enough to run after us with it. We only got about three miles on our way before dark. The first night in the waggon was rather uncomfortable, owing to the quantity of unpacked baggage which encumbered

the waggon. We had a sharp storm during the night, and the Doctor was very jubilant because the canvass top of the waggon did not let in the wet. It was an old waggon, and had been laid up for some months, and we were a little dubious about its being waterproof. The Doctor's rejoicing was a little premature, as will be seen in the sequel.

Next morning we rose with the sun at six. Before starting we had coffee; the coffee and the inspanning detained us till seven. The process of inspanning is not without interest. The oxen are generally tethered to the disselboom during the night. In the morning they are collected, and riems, or thongs of hide, are thrown over their horns. They are then picked out in couples. Each couple is taken to its proper place in the span, and a yoke is placed over the necks of the oxen. The animals are all trained to answer to their names, but anxiety to crop a last little bit of grass before starting sometimes makes them refractory. When all are in place, the driver mounts his box, and the forelooper runs to the front and catches at a rope attached to the horns of the leading couple. The driver cracks his huge whip, shouts out "trek," and the unwieldly machine starts on its travels.

The "outspan" is a reversal of the above proceedings, and is done much more quickly. The strops are slipped, and the yokes lifted from the necks of the oxen, who rush away like boys dismissed from school. The trek-tow is extended on the ground in front of the waggon, the yokes being placed at right angles, at proper intervals, ready for

the next inspan. The yoke next the disselboom is usually placed in an upright position, so as to support it. There is always a good deal of shouting and scolding to be done on inspanning and outspanning. It is impossible for a native to work without using his tongue.

There are one or two roads to the Transvaal. We chose the one which runs through the towns of Winburg and Kroonstad, and we made a slight detour so as to pass Mr. B's farm. We found both Rhenoster Spruit and the Modder River down. We outspanned at the canteen on the opposite side of the river, and a little incident occurred here, which illustrates the worst side of the Boer character. We found the grass at the drift eaten down, but about a mile away there was some long grass near a dam belonging to a Boer, who had a house close at hand. We were about sending our oxen there to feed, when the canteen keeper informed us that the Boer would not allow anyone to send oxen to graze there. Dr. Lawton had outspanned at the place on his way to Bloemfontein, when he was taking the journey which ended so unluckily, and found the Boer in great trouble on account of the sudden illness of his daughter. The Doctor gave her some medicine which relieved her, and the father was profuse in his expressions of gratitude; and we now appealed to him with full confidence that his gratitude would be again manifested, and our moderate request to be allowed to graze our oxen an hour or two would be granted. To our surprise the old fellow refused. Dr. Lawton reminded him that he had saved his

daughter from pain, if not from a serious illness. "Oh," said the Boer, that was "voor vriendschap"—for friendship. The Doctor asked him to reciprocate the friendship, but the churlish fellow was determined not to give us a farthing's worth of grass, and went away amidst a shower of strong language from the Doctor, which I thought perfectly justifiable. After he departed we revenged ourselves by concocting a bill of costs for medical advice, which, I was delighted to hear subsequently, gave him a sleepless night, and obliged him to consult a lawyer—an expensive luxury up-country.

We got to Mr. B's late at night, but he was from home. In accordance with colonial usage, we made no scruple of using his house as our own, and getting a supper out of the contents of his pantry.

Next morning we were off at half-past six. We passed the house of Rensburg, the Boer who had done his best to drown Dr. Lawton; and after getting into difficulties by trying a short cut across the veld, we came in sight of a village called Brandfort. About half-past eleven we reached some water a mile from the village, and we were so sharp set with hunger, that we halted and had breakfast. In the afternoon we started again, and stopped at Brandfort for a few minutes. It is a new settlement, and is named after the President of the Republic. It is a dismal-looking place, consisting of a collection of small squat houses, a store or two, and a small hotel. Shortly after we left Brandfort, a storm commenced. The blue sky became clouded over with dark lowering cumulus-clouds massed together

in huge piles, showing here and there a tinge of copper, from which issued sullen mutterings of thunder. The evening was drawing on, but thick black clouds shrouded us from the light, long before the proper time arrived for the disappearance of the sun. As the darkness increased, flashes of lightning began to light up the sky. In a short time the road became perfectly invisible. A thick darkness covered us in on every side. The lightning grew more and more vivid, till at length it was so continuous, that we were able to grope our way along by the aid of its light alone. Both our boys and ourselves crouched almost in terror at the blinding light, while I could not free my mind from what might happen if the lightning struck us, or our ammunition. Such accidents are not rare in South Africa. The oxen pushed along uneasy and warily, giving vent to a few groans from time to time. Soon a pattering was heard on the top of the waggon. In a few minutes it became a deluge, and the rain descended in sheets. At length, by the light of the flashes, we perceived a farm house in the distance. We were a long time reaching it, and to do so we had to feel our way across a spruit, where we were nearly upset. We drew up under a garden wall, which afforded some protection from the gusts of wind, but the rain continued with unabated violence. We went to bed supperless and cheerless, and before the lantern was put out we cast many anxious glances at our waggon tilt, over which we had drawn some canvas to make it more waterproof. The boys were wet through, and their bed under the

waggon was two inches deep in water, but somehow or other they managed to get to rest, as their snores testified. I was tired, and also fell asleep. About two o'clock in the morning, while I was busily engaged in Dreamland on the other side of the Equator, I heard sounds, which presently resolved themselves into the voice of the Doctor shouting to me to get up and strike a light. I did so, and found him sitting up in his nightshirt, catching the water, which was trickling through the waggon tilt, in a small "cometjie" or basin. Soon it began to leak in at my end, and I had to follow suit. We roused our snoring boys with some difficulty, and they pulled the canvass off. The deluge thereupon ceased a little, but notwithstanding our efforts, everything got wet. I dressed, and we waited anxiously for daylight.

In the morning there was no dry fuel to light a fire with, and we had to go without coffee. Rather shortsightedly we had neglected to provide ourselves with an Etna, which would have rendered us independent of weather. It was still raining, but the lightning had gone. We served out brandy all round, and then started. The road was a mass of mud, through which the oxen and Swartboy had to wade up to the knees. We outspanned for breakfast, during a moment of less rain, at the farm of a Boer, called "Arwe," or some such name, who understood a little English. We started on a fresh journey at half-past two, and reached the banks of the Groot Vet River at dusk. We hardly expected to find the river fordable, and our expectations were realised. There were some waggons on the bank, and the

drivers one, and all, agreed that it would not be safe to attempt to cross. We had therefore to outspan on the mud above the banks. The rain had given over a short time before, but there were distant mutterings of thunder, and everything both inside and outside the waggon was wet and damp. Just after supper some people came up, in a more miserable plight than ourselves, by the post-cart from Bloemfontein to Natal. They had been out since early morning in a badly covered cart, and had only had a few sandwiches to eat. There were three passengers and the driver. We made them some hot coffee for which they were grateful. They had to sleep in the cart together as well as they could. One of them said in the morning that when one turned, the others had to do the same, and half their bodies were in the open air. In comparison with them, we felt quite luxurious, as we turned in on our wet blankets.

When we got up the next morning we found the river still up. After coffee, I went down to look at it, and stuck a peg near the margin, for the purpose of observing whether it was rising or falling. The peg remained uncovered an hour afterwards, and the driver of the post-cart determined to risk the passage, remarking that the cart could but be upset. The passengers did not relish the prospect of another night out, and they concurred in going. A young Boer from the neighbourhood volunteered to lead the way on horseback. The horses were inspanned, and the cart was led down to the drift. The driver took the reins, a passenger held the whip, and the rest sat with their legs in the air. The water came into the

cart, but they managed to get safely through, and we saw them no more. After watching them over, we determined to try, with the help of the young Boer. We placed all our perishable goods on the cartel, and stationed ourselves near the door, ready to jump out in case of an upset. Fortunately, we got through without any mishap, except the loss of our potatoes and onions, which were washed away, and went sailing and bobbing against one another down stream. We outspanned for breakfast on the opposite side. The sun re-appeared, and we placed all our wet things in the sunshine to dry. In less than an hour they were perfectly dry. We found the young man who helped us to cross was the son of the field cornet of the district, and his father came up to us, and after seeing his son duly paid for his services, was good enough to drink our health in our brandy, and to swear eternal "vriendschap" with us. We started on our travels at three o'clock, and asked our friend to see us over the little Vet River, which we had to cross before reaching Winburg. Put to a practical test, "vriendschap" resolved itself into seven shillings and sixpence. This was too dear for us, and we declined to accept it. When we reached the river, we saw a transport waggon preparing to cross, and we waited to profit by example. I should explain that a transport waggon simply means a waggon used for carrying goods. The driver is called a "transport rider." The transport rider first sent some oxen across. Judging from their behaviour that there was no risk, he then brought his waggon over. We watched him, and

got across afterwards, with the help of his boy, without much difficulty, though the water was quite six feet deep. On the other side we met two gentlemen from Winburg, who had come down in a buggy to see the state of the water. The Doctor knew one of them, and before the buggy departed, he promised to order dinner for us at the hotel. We followed slowly. The road ran through a pretty valley with a few trees in it. At the entrance of the valley, I noticed some rocks of a columnar structure, similar to the basalt of Skye. The columns were perpendicular. We reached Winburg about half-past seven, and outspanned on the veld outside the town. We found Dr. Lawton's friend had been true to his promise, and that dinner was awaiting us at Cogill's Hotel. We had determined before starting not to sleep in a house during our trip, and therefore after dinner we returned to our waggon to spend the night.

The next day was Sunday. There was no service anywhere in English, and we spent the day under the hospitable roof of Dr. L, of Winburg. He had met Dr. Lawton at Bloemfontein, and at once received us with open arms. The two Doctors spent some part of the day in examining a series of murderous looking instruments which Dr. L had been importing from England, but which I, as a layman, and a possible subject for operation, was unable to appreciate. We also made the acquaintance, at Winburg, of a Mr. W, who was travelling with cheap jewellery among the Boers, and who asked permission to accompany us as far as Kroonstad,

the next town. He understood Dutch, and offered to assist us on the way, and we therefore joined company. His waggon was heavily weighted with goods which only left room for part of his body, and when he went to sleep his legs projected into the open air, though he did not seem to mind the inconvenience. He had been a sailor, then a farmer, then a landrost's clerk, and had also done some diamond digging. His driver spoke English, and was a very favourable specimen of a civilised native, being next door to a white. He was as full of resources as his master, and we coveted Mr. W the possession of such a useful man, when we compared him with our boy Benjamin, who had now begun to show a little of his true character.

On Monday we said good-bye to our kind friends, and departed on our way. At the suggestion of Mr. W, who wanted to push on, we tried three treks, or "scoffs," daily, instead of two. We travelled from daybreak till nine, then from twelve to two, and again from six to half-past eight. The moon was shining brightly and we were able to drive in safety after sunset by its light. We also had the advantage of getting our dinners before dark. On the whole, nevertheless, I preferred the other plan of only two treks, as being less fatiguing. Transport riders do most of their trekking in the night, so as to spare their oxen, and rest by day. We were often told that we had no business to have the oxen at work longer than an hour after daybreak; we did not, however, find they came to any harm from working in the sun, though perhaps it might

have been different if they had had six or seven thousand pounds to drag after them.

I have purposely been somewhat minute in my description of the journey from Bloemfontein to Winburg, in order to place before the reader some notion of our usual life. I must now get over the ground quicker, and only refer to the more noteworthy incidents of our trek.

Our second day out of Winburg was signalised by some visitors in the shape of two Basuto witch doctors, accompanied by a boy. The junior doctor was a splendidly built fellow. He had an old billycock hat on his head, ornamented with inflated bladders. A small knife for scraping off sweat from his body was strung to a necklace. Kaffirs do not profess to wash, as I have before explained; hence the necessity for a sweat scraper. A small piece of root hung near it, and a girdle, decorated with bits of bones and roots, was slung at his left side, together with long purses of flexible wickerwork containing "medicines." We asked what he would take for the necklace, through one of Mr. W's boys, who understood his language. He replied, "Two hunderd twinty pound," which was evidently his acme of all possible value. A skin kaross and sandals completed his costume. His companion was a much older man, with a villainously cunning face. He wore some dirty European rags which did not add to his appearance. The lad was pretty nearly in a state of nature; he appeared to be a disciple of the old man.

We got the doctors to tell us our fortunes. They

squatted in the usual uncomfortable style which the natives adopt when they want to be easy, round a bare patch on the veld; the young doctor ate a piece of root, and then taking a bag from the old fellow, shook it about and poured its contents, consisting of sheeps' ancle and knuckle bones, bits of metal, roots, and odds and ends of all kinds, on the veld. He touched them in succession, singing a grunting chant, and after a consultation with his superior, proceeded to deliver the momentous decrees of fate. He said there was a man and a girl sick on the road and the Doctor would be asked to attend them. We considered this a very safe prediction, considering the number of miles which lay before us, and we pressed for some further proof of his powers. I requested to be told why I was travelling in South Africa, but the doctors did not wish to commit themselves, and declined any further fortune telling. We gave them sixpence, for which they were exuberantly grateful, and doctor No 2 treated us to a dance for it. They remained by the waggons during our dinner, and eyed us with such a hungry aspect, that we felt compelled to give them something to eat, and they then went away comforted.

The witch doctors are a great curse to the half civilised natives, as well as to the barbarian tribes. Nearly all the outbreaks which have occurred in late years are traceable, directly or indirectly, to their agency. Even the really converted native can hardly free himself from the influence of these crafty men, and I have heard missionaries complain

that they were the greatest impediments to the civilisation of the natives. The belief in their powers for evil is widespread, and as the natives only really respect such unknown beings as they think are capable of injuring them, they are ready to do anything to propitiate their ministers. The practice of "smelling out" sorcerers still prevails, and although a man who is smelt out is not allowed to be killed, as he formerly used to be, with horrible tortures, things are generally made so unpleasant for him that he is obliged to leave his native kraal. Among the Zulus, under Ketchwayo, the supposed sorcerers were generally slain. The witch doctor is the "smeller," and is able for that reason to exercise an amount of material influence over his tribe, in addition to his supposed spiritual powers. It is astonishing how extensively the belief in the demoniacal possession of the doctors prevails even among educated men; many a white settler is not ashamed to avow his belief that they are inspired by the devil, and I have heard startling anecdotes of their doings, from eye-witnesses. The subject is worth investigation in a scientific manner, if only because it lies at the root of the native character and customs.

We outspanned on the night of the second day at Ventersburg, a little village with about twenty houses and two stores, and even more melancholy in appearance than Brandfort. The roads, alternately muddy, and baked in the sun, had cracked the hoof of one of our oxen, and we had to hold a council over him. After some palaver, Mr. W suggested

shoeing him with leather till we could reach a smith and have him shod with iron. To do this the ox had to be pulled over on his side, oxen not being able to lift up their feet like horses. The poor beast was much bewildered at the treatment he received and his hurt feelings did not recover from the shock for some hours afterwards, and it made me laugh to see him shaking his head and grumbling in low groans after he was released. Mr. W tried to do a little trading at Ventersburg, but without success. Nature had endowed him with a seductive tongue, but even he failed to win the hearts of the burghers, and he had the trouble of pulling out his wares for nothing.

We left about mid-day, Mr. W vowing that the Vendersburg people had no discrimination. Our route during the rest of the day lay over uninteresting plains. The scenery did not improve till our second trek on the following day. In the course of the morning I got a specimen of the spur-winged plover *(Hoplopterus armatus)*, remarkable for a sharp spiny spur attached to the bend of the wing. Another plover, called the "kiewitje" (*Hoplopterus coronatus*), without a spur, is frequent on the veld, and I used often to hear its plaintive wail, as I lay in the waggon in the grey of the morning, in the half-conscious state intervening between the death of sleep and the wakening to life, and then its weird cry was wont to echo in my ear, like the scream of some ghostly visitant fleeing before the dawn. There is something unearthly, even in broad daylight, about a plover—in its lapping flight, its

tricks to draw off attention from its offspring, and its mournful call. What the purpose of the spur may be I cannot say, nor why one plover should have it, and not another. I do not know whether it has ever attracted the notice of any Darwinist. If it has, I should like to ask which is the survival of the fittest, the absence or presence of the spur.

About three o'clock we reached the top of a hill, with a few trees upon it, from which we caught a glimpse of Kroonstad, in a hollow below. Before reaching the town, we had to cross a spruit called Bloemspruit, which we had been told would be dangerous if the water was up. Fortunately, the spruit was nearly empty, and we got through without difficulty.

Kroonstad is situated on the banks of the Valsch River. The stream makes a huge curve at the point where it touches the town, which is built on the tongue of land inside the curve. There is a drift across the river, opposite the centre of Kroonstad, and the road from it leads directly into the Market Square. The town looked very pretty from the opposite, or Bloemfontein, side of the drift. The banks immediately above and below were margined into cliffs, and there was a break in the bed of the stream above the drift, which caused the water to fall precipitously in a cataract of a few feet in height. Trees of various sorts were dotted about the banks, and above them on one side rose the low buildings of the town.

The Market Square was covered with grass. We outspanned in the middle of it, and as we sat round

our fires at night, I could hardly help comparing myself to the showmen who used to pitch their portable theatres in the market place of a little town in Lincolnshire, where I went to school, and whom we schoolboys used to watch with breathless interest as they cooked their suppers on the market pavement. Dr. Lawton found another friend here in the shape of Dr. B who would have us all in to his house to supper.

The next day was Good Friday. The Boers do not observe either Good Friday or Christmas Day, but by a coincidence, the Sunday following happened to be the quarterly "Nachtmaal," and we found the place was gradually filling with waggon-loads of Dutchmen.

Nachtmaal is the quarterly administration of the Lord's Supper, and is regarded with the same interest in Boerland as the similar institution in Scotland. To many of the Boers it is the only opportunity of attending public worship. They live at such distances from the church, that it is impossible for them to attend every Sunday. But everybody makes a point of attending Nachtmaal. The Boeress (pardon the word) prepares for it long before hand. The Boer himself looks over his waggon, and gets out his best span of oxen, and his smartest neckerchief. All the family are brought, along with the family chairs. It used to be a wonderful, and, to a bachelor like myself, a meditation-provoking sight, to see the numbers of children who would turn out of a waggon on its way to Nachtmaal. The chairs are used in the church. Dutch churches

are only half filled with sittings, for economy's sake. On reaching the church town the waggon is pitched near the church. The richer Boers in the Kroonstad district had houses in the town, which they occupied at Nachtmaal, but usually the farmer lives in his waggon all the time. Nachtmaal is made use of not only for the administration of the Sacrament, but also for baptisings and marryings—and it gives opportunities for the observance of those preliminaries generally considered necessary before marryings. It also serves for purposes of trade, and secular and sacred duties run cheek by jowl in a somewhat promiscuous fashion.

The church at Kroonstad was the handsomest Dutch church I remember seeing in South Africa. It cost £11,000, a large sum to be raised among Boers, who are generally very chary at parting with money. It occupied the centre of a large square, which was fast filling with the waggons of the farmers. Mr. W was very anxious to sell some of his jewellery to the church comers, and in the course of the day he moved his waggon into the church square, and we went with him for company's sake.

During the morning the two Doctors and I went for a stroll. I took my photographic apparatus with me, but only got one good picture out of three. We went to the river above the town, where the sandstone cliffs on one side, and the greensward gently sloping upwards towards a park like country dotted with trees on the opposite side, gave me faint reminders of Derbyshire scenery. The sun was hot,

and we were glad to return to the waggons. When we arrived, we had a scene with Benjamin, our driver, which ended in his consignment to jail. He had become sulkier, and more difficult to deal with the further we got from Bloemfontein, and one reason which induced us to join Mr. W was the hope that the example of his boys would improve Benjamin. We might as well have tried to make a pig's curly tail straight. He got worse instead of better, and told Mr. W's boys he should desert us some quiet night, and leave us in difficulties on the veld. When we arrived at Kroonstad, we sent him to arrange about getting our lame ox shod. He came back looking sulkier than ever, and told us the smith would not work at Nachtmaal. His manner was equivocal, and we went to inquire, and found on inquiry he had told us a direct lie. On our way back we saw him slinking out of a public-house, and soon afterwards he came up to the waggons, drunk and abusive. We opened our minds to him, and then told him to take his things and go. He departed for a short time, but came back again, more drunk and more abusive. We happened just then to be talking with the landrost, or magistrate of the place, and this dignitary, hearing some of Benjamin's polite language, straightway beckoned to a native constable, and the offender was carried off to the "tronk." Next morning I appeared in the novel character of prosecutor. I attended at the landrost's office, and was shown politely to a seat. Benjamin was brought in looking somewhat dejected and bedraggled. I informed the landrost (not on oath) that he had

been guilty of insubordination, drunkenness, and foul language. The magistrate asked whether I would take him back. I said "No." He then read him a little lecture, telling him that he was not an ignorant Kaffir, but that he had received some education, and knowing that he was travelling with two invalids, he ought to have been specially obedient, instead of which he had done his best to mar all the benefit they hoped to derive from their trip. He ended by sentencing him to a fortnight's imprisonment, with hard labour.

The whole affair was over in ten minutes. No doubt in our case substantial justice was done, but I could hardly help reflecting how small the chances of a native would be in the Free State, when pitted against the word of a white man. Perhaps my mind, accustomed to the more precise forms of English justice, may have attached too much weight to the omission of the ceremony of administering an oath.

Our next business was to hunt up a new driver. Our friend, Dr. B accompanied us in the evening of Friday for this purpose to the native location, but we were unable to meet with one there. We extended our walk some distance down the stream, and inspected some more pretty river scenery. The walk and the excitement attending the dismissal of Benjamin knocked up poor Lawton completely, and he was coughing fearfully during the night. While we were gone for our walk, Mr. W held an auction sale, at which he managed to dispose of a lot of clocks and watches at a very remunerative profit.

On Saturday we found a boy named William; he was a Kaffir of the flat-nosed persuasion, hailing from the Mozambique. His chief characteristic was stupidity. He spoke no English, and could not be made to understand signs. If there was a hole, he drove us into it, and if there was a stone, he drove us over it. It was, however, a case of Hobson's choice. The only thing we could find against his moral character was a failing for mutton, which had led to his being made a prisoner for sheep stealing. This was a venial offence for a Kaffir, and we engaged him.

We left Kroonstad on Saturday evening, amid the kind farewells of our friends, Dr. B and his wife. Poor Dr. Lawton was very unwell, and I arranged with Dr. B to return to Kroonstad if he did not improve. We only trekked for about an hour, and then outspanned on the veld, so as to prevent any of the boys giving way to the fascinations of Kroonstad. Notwithstanding our precautions, William and Mr. W's forelooper managed to get away, and they returned in the small hours, Jack, the forelooper, being very drunk. He was so drunk, indeed, that Lawton had to doctor him in the morning, after his master had properly dilated upon the enormity of his offence, and after the conscience and stomach-stricken culprit had promised "never to do it again."

The country between Kroonstad and the Vaal River was flat and devoid of interest.

I observed a change in the appearance of the ant hills as we progressed onwards. Further south they

were rounded at the top like cocks of hay. Now they were shaped like sugar loaves, with a narrow shaft down the centre. The top of the shaft was surrounded by a small parapet placed there, for what reason I know not. Possibly it might have been for the purpose of warding off the attacks of some insect not able to crawl up a perpendicular surface. I put the whip stock down one of them, and it sunk in quite three feet below the surface at the top. The inhabitants poured out in great force to the attack, when the stock was withdrawn.

On our way, Mr. W found some friends at a small house on the road side, and hung behind to have a chat with them. We found ourselves very helpless when left alone with our new boy, William. The Doctor understood no Dutch, and I knew next to none, and the boy was too stupid to understand signals. He drove very badly, and we did nothing but keep up a chorus of "Pass oop voor de klippe," ("Look out for the stones"). Fortunately, the road was rather annoying than dangerous, the country being quite free from hills of any size. Swartboy was in great feather now we had got rid of his tormentor, Benjamin, and sung for glee as he forelooped. To my astonishment the tune he favoured us with was "Angels of Jesus," in Kaffir, of course. I suppose he must have picked it up from some black brother, who had been at a native school. We took things more leisurely in the absence of Mr. W, but we missed the deft hands of his semi-coloured satellite, Barney, when we came to prepare dinner. William seemed to have a fixed idea that it was a waste of

good food to clean the remnants out of the dishes, and he would have put them all away unwashed, but for our strong objurgations, which had to be repeated whenever he was *maître d'hotel.*

We crossed a considerable river, known as Rhenoster River, on the Tuesday after leaving Kroonstad. We came across an English farmer on the opposite side, who gave us half a bucket of milk, for which, in the hospitable manner of the English up-country, he would take no payment. We did not outspan till ten, when the keen air had given us such keen appetites that Nature cried "Hold! enough." I was pleased to see the Doctor was picking up a little, and able to eat his food with a relish under the influence of the clear, warm, dry air. As for me I was always hungry, delightfully hungry. Only those who have lain on a bed of sickness, or suffered a lingering illness, which makes all food caviare, can appreciate the delights of real hunger. How good Nature seemed to be as we sat on either side of the pot, poking the bits of meat and the potatoes to see whether they were soft enough to eat; and then the felicity of pouring the steaming mass on to our plates, and eating with a relish! Next to a complete return to health, I think returning appetite is the greatest animal enjoyment; and often when my weak interior rebels at the flesh pots of Egypt, I look back, almost with regret, at those plains, where despite many discomforts, I relearnt how to eat.

A few hills began to show themselves as we neared the Vaal River. They showed a better sky outline than the flat-topped kops and kopjies, amongst

which we had been travelling so long. The veld, too, became in better condition and free from caterpillars. We reached the river after dusk. Our clumsy boy drove us half way down the steep road leading to the drift before we knew where we were. When we stopped we found there was no turning round in the thick bush ; and we had to outspan with our bed at an angle. My head was lower than my feet when I went to bed, and as the Americans say, "I guess I dreamt some." I ought to do the driver the credit of saying that between my bad Dutch, and Dr. Lawton's strong English, he had lost his head before he got to the drift.

Just after dinner we heard shouts in the distance, and soon afterwards Mr. W drove up. He had made a big trek to join us. The ever welcome Barney prepared supper for the trio, and I retired to rest as peacefully as my position would permit.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE BOERS.

I HAVE now arrived at the boundary line between an existing and former Boer Republic, and as I had frequent opportunities of studying the manners and customs of this interesting people, I shall not perhaps be considered out of place in devoting a chapter to them and their ways.

The Boers are not all Dutchmen. Many of them are descendants of Huguenots. At the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in France, some fugitives, fleeing from persecution, found refuge in Holland. The refugees were offered an asylum at the Cape, and upwards of one hundred and fifty availed themselves of the offer, and emigrated to South Africa. For a little time they were allowed to hold their services, and to carry on their proceedings in the French tongue; but the military despotism which prevailed under the rule of the Dutch India Company soon crushed out the remains of their nationality. In fifty years the use of their mother tongue had almost died out; and by the end of the eighteenth century it was quite extinct. In other respects also, they became assimilated to the Dutch settlers around. Nothing now remains but their names to distinguish that they were once French. Some of these are curiously distorted; De Villiers is

always called "Filje," evidently a Dutch approximation to the French sound of "Villiers." Another remnant of their ancient language is perhaps the use of a double negative, common to Cape-Dutch, but unknown in Holland. On the uplands a very great proportion of the names are French. Such are Marais, Joubert, Du Toit, and Théron, which are constantly occurring. It is remarkable that some of the most "Dutchy" of the Boers in their dislike to the English are those with French names.

There is a difference between the Boers in different parts of the country. In Cape Colony they are confined principally to the western and midland districts. The neighbourhood of Capetown is largely occupied by settlements of Boers. The Paarl and Stellenbosch are, for example, almost entirely inhabited by Dutchmen, who carry on the great staple trades of wine growers and waggon builders. The Boers of this district are quite settled. Their houses are clean and snug, and they are well up to the mark with modern civilisation. They still retain their old habits of hospitality and courtesy to strangers; but they no doubt have helped to give the selfish and insulated tone of feeling to Cape sentiments, which has often tinctured its intercourse with the mother country.

The Western Boers exhibit to the full the great physical size of the family. The middle-aged Boers one sees in Capetown are a head and shoulders above the English settlers. Sometimes they are thin, but generally the tallness is counter-

balanced by a pair of shoulders and a waist in keeping.

The Karroo Boer is an unpleasant specimen of his kind. He is dirty and uneducated, and he has been so spoilt by passers-through to the Diamond Fields that he is generally inhospitable, and often uncivil. He is withal lazy to a degree.

Beyond the Karroo, the Boers become more civilised, and some of them run hard on the heels of their English neighbours. The type of Boer sketched by the editor of the *Richmond Era* is dying out. The potent wand of commerce is making rapid changes, and the Boer becomes less a Boer every year.

In the Orange Free State the same causes are operating, the Diamond Fields having made many of the farmers wealthy. The young Boers are sent to some one of the excellent schools in Bloemfontein, where they learn European habits and tastes. Most of the traders and professional men, and some of the farmers are European. Contact with them has rubbed off many of the Boer peculiarities. National pride also leads the Boers to emulate the luxuries of their English neighbours. I was introduced to a farmer near Bethany, whose house, I was told, was quite a showplace, and whose chamber for the reception of guests was remarkable for the elegance of its furniture. The bulk of the Boer houses still remain dirty and uncomfortable, but the neighbourhood of the wealthy communities of Kimberley and Dutoitspan, and the influx of European settlers is gradually improving the old-fashioned Boer off the face of the country.

In the Transvaal things are different; the seclusion in which the South African Republic nursed itself so many years has nourished and intensified the prejudices and habits of the race. Nowhere is the Boer to be found so much *au naturel*, and I propose, therefore, in this chapter mainly to confine myself to a description of the Transvaal Boers.

The typical Boer prides himself in being as far removed from his neighbours as possible. He therefore plants his house in the centre of his farm. This ordinarily ranges from 3,000 to 6,000 morgen—that is from about 6,000 to 12,000 acres. He selects a position not far from a fontein, and preferably in the open. I presume houses were originally built in the flat for the purpose of preventing hostile natives having any cover from which to attack the house. The habit still remains even where the necessity for the position is gone. The house is consequently in a situation to receive the unmitigated rays of the mid-day sun, and where there is least chance of enjoying any of the amenities which guide a man in selecting a site at home. The sheep and cattle kraals are placed near the house. In the Free State the tops of the kraal walls are garnished with large masses of the fuel of the country placed ready for use. The kraals are often constructed of cakes of mud and earth piled on one another, with more regard to symmetry than arrangement.

The house is generally built of sun-dried bricks. There is no genuine mortar to be had, and the spaces between the bricks are imperfectly filled with mud. The roof is either thatched or covered with corrugated iron. The thatched houses have a

more comfortable look than the others. Corrugated iron is a most ungainly material, and however well treated, it always offends the eye. Moreover the Boer, for economy's sake, usually makes his corrugated iron roof flat, or with just sufficient pitch to carry off the rain. The thatched roofs are always pitched pretty steeply, and assist in giving a finish to the building. Except the kraals, there are no enclosures near the house. If the owner is a man of æsthetic tendencies, he plants some blue gum trees round his house. The better houses have stoeps in front, but the smaller ones seldom. The garden, if there is one, is a little distance from the house.

The sight which greets the eye of the traveller, on driving up to a farm-house, is usually that of a square, squat, chocolate-red building with windows and a door, and possibly a faint attempt at an ornamental ridge in front. The holes left for the scaffold poles are still open, and are filled with nests of the beautiful Cape swallow (*Hirundo capensis*) whose graceful black and red form may be seen flitting around the house, and occasionally dashing inside after some insect. These birds are never killed by the Boers, who welcome their presence for the services they render in killing flies. The house is planted in the midst of the veld, and no walls or fences are visible. If there is a stoep it will probably be unshaded from the hot sun, except in rare cases where blue gum or fig trees moderate the fiery beams. In the rear of the house, which is in like manner unprotected with walls or railings, will probably be three

or four native huts with little black picaninnies and Kaffir dogs crawling about; a little distance off are the sheep kraals, and, in some convenient situation, a small garden and mealie patch, and a dam which supplies the water for irrigation purposes.

On approaching the house a number of curs appear yapping and yelping from all quarters, but their looks are more formidable than their performances, and the sight of a stick sends them to a distance. As you near the house the farmer walks slowly forth. He is probably a tall, ragged-looking figure dressed in flaming pegtop corduroy trousers, a short coat like a little boy's jacket, no collar, and a billycock hat; his hair hangs, like a gipsy's, all round his face, looking as if it very seldom saw a comb; his feet are decorated with veldschoen, or shoes made by his own hands out of untanned hide. As you approach, the hand is thrust forth. It touches yours but does not grasp it, and is quickly withdrawn as though the owner had touched red-hot iron. The usual salutation follows: "Dag, oom." "Dag, neef." ("Good-day, uncle." "Good-day, nephew.") A Boer paterfamilias is mostly addressed as "oom," uncle, and his wife as "aunt." Then follow a series of inquiries beginning, "Wie is hij?" ("Who are you?") "Waar kom hij van daan?" ("Where do you come from?") following with a string of questions contrived to elicit all about your person and your property, and generally finishing with an inquiry if you are married and, if so, how many children you have. In return, the Boer expects to be asked similar

questions, and he is delighted to be able to lecture you—presumably a bachelor—on the advantages of having a wife and children. Having thus satisfied his curiosity, the invitation follows, "Kom binnen," ("Come in,") and you are requested to place yourself on the seat of honour or "rustbank," which is a long seat, something like what is called the "lang settle" in Yorkshire. But before doing this, there is a ceremony to be gone through, which must on no account be omitted, or you will be set down as quite unfit for civilised society. You must shake hands, in Boer fashion, with every person in the room, beginning with the good lady, or haus-vrouw, who sits in state by the coffee-urn, going through sons and sons' wives, daughters and daughters' husbands, and finishing up with the little dirty-nosed boy, the youngest of fifteen, who stands by, shyly watching the wonderful man from the colony. If you can pat the rosy-cheeked urchin on the cheek, or bestow on him a sweetmeat, you win to your side the potent influence of the "vrouw," and you receive at once the calumet of peace in the shape of a basin of coffee, which is taken from the simmering urn by the hands of the matron herself, and handed to you by one of her numerous progeny. Only, turn your head away while the basin is cleaned with the dirty cloth of all work, or your dainty European fastidiousness may lead you to commit an unpardonable sin, and to reject the offering of friendship. Nor marvel not if you have neither milk nor sugar; remember milk is almost unknown in this country of oxen and cows, and

sugar is two shillings, and half-a-crown a pound. Among the more civilised Boers, milk and sugar, and cups and saucers are used; but in the Transvaal the farmer has not yet arrived at such expensive luxuries.

After having sat for half an hour discussing the state of the veld, the price of wool, or the marvels of far off England, you approach the real object of your visit, by asking the good man in a casual sort of way if he has any meat or fowls for sale. He refers you to "mevrouw," who, after turning the matter over carefully, comes to the conclusion that she can spare a leg of meat, *i.e.*, mutton. It is brought forth, the price—half-a-crown—is paid, and you depart shaking hands all round carefully a second time, and accompanied to your waggon by the Boer, now on friendly terms.

If there should happen to be a meal during your visit, you will be asked to sit down to it. The Boer usually has only two meals a day, both consisting almost entirely of stewed meat. He rises at or before daybreak, and takes a cup of the inevitable coffee. I may remark in passing that Boer coffee is never good. Half the decoction consists of grounds, from which the liquid has to be decanted by carefully tilting the cup or basin before pouring the contents down the throat. A visit to a series of farm houses is consequently a trial to a weak stomach. After his morning coffee, the Boer stands by the kraal, while the black herdsmen drive the sheep forth, and sees that they are all right. Having performed this heavy duty, he may, if he is a very

vigorous man, help some of his sons or sons-in-law in making an embankment, or in irrigating the mealie patch. At ten he has his first meal. The middle of the day is occupied by a siesta, during which the doors and shutters are closed. About four o'clock comes the awakening and more coffee. Then supper about six, and bed at eight.

I had the pleasure of dining on one occasion with a Boer family. It was at a farm house on the high veld between Rustenberg and Potchefstroom. The house was situated on the bare flat, without a tree in sight. It consisted of a small "voorhuis" or general parlour, a kitchen, two bedrooms—which accommodated the Boer, his wife, an old grand dame, an almost grown up daughter, and eight or ten children—and an out-house, which was used as a school-house by a broken-down Englishman, who received a small stipend for educating the farmer's children. The extent of their acquirements may be judged, when it is stated that the eldest daughter, a girl of seventeen, was only just learning to write. The voorhuis looked directly on the veld, and the kitchen opened on to it on one side, the bedrooms being on the other. So far as I could see, there was no light admitted into the house except through the upper half of the door, and a small window in the voorhuis. There were shutters over some other apertures which served for windows, but which appeared to be opened very occasionally.

We got our meal at a small table which was laid with knives and forks, but without a table-cloth. The

men all dined first, while the women watched their masters. The first course consisted of a sort of soup, eaten out of basins. The second and concluding course was salt meat and mealies. The salt meat was in a bowl, into which each person dipped his fork when he wanted a little more. After we lords of creation had satisfied our appetites, the table was carried to the womens' corner, and we smoked while they dined. The children squatted on the floor, with their meat in one hand and a basin in the other, and the dogs fought and snarled amongst them. Our host was as kind as his means permitted, and would take nothing either for the meal, or for some tobacco which he pulled down for our use from the rafters overhead, where it was hung to dry. After dinner the Englishman told us the farmer had five hundred sheep and two hundred cattle, so that he must have been a substantial man. It was on this occasion I saw a Boer family wash themselves. Just before we sat down to dinuer, a small basin was brought in with a little hot water in it, and each person slipped his or her hands in it, and then dried them by waving them about for a few minutes. No soap was used.

The Boers are always courteous to their guests. During our ox waggon journey I was supposed to know Dutch, and had to act as interpreter. My knowledge of the language was confined to about twenty words, and my attempts at forming sentences used to set my English friends off into roars of laughter. Notwithstanding my execrable language, I was never laughed at by the Boers save once, and that

was when a girl, unable to resist longer, put her head outside the door, and went into paroxysms, which I am sure were quite justifiable. The Boers listen gravely and with attention to all the stranger has to say, and assent to all even if they do not believe it. They like to listen to stories about the outer world, and swallow the yarns of the English settlers with a simple credulity, which ought to save them from being imposed upon. Their simplicity on ordinary points of geography is remarkable. A considerable stream is known in the Transvaal as the Nylstrom, simply because some of the trek Boers thought they had reached the River Nile. R, who had been to America, was introduced to a Boer in the Free State as a great traveller. "Ah," said the Boer, "I have a brother who has also been a great traveller. He has been to Bloemfontein, and to Winburg, and to Harrismith, and even to Aliwal North (on the Orange River)!"

The universal hand shaking, or rather hand touching, is one form of Boer courtesy. Another instance is to be found in the way in which "complimenten" or good wishes, are carried about the country. If a member of a family goes to pay a visit, he is straitly charged to take the separate compliments of the members of his family to the members of the one he has to visit. When the Duke of Edinburgh was in the Free State he put up for the night at a farm house. When he left in the morning the Boer shook hands with him, and shouted after him as he rode off "Compliments to your mamma."

It is strange to find the descendants of Hollanders

so dirty. Very few Boers change their clothes at night. In some parts of the Transvaal, an Englishman is looked upon as effeminate because he requires a nightshirt. The dirty habits of the people lead to their houses being infected with insects; and when crossing the middle veld of the Free State, I was warned not to sleep in a Boer house for fear of catching some skin disease.

One of the best traits of the Boers is their attachment to their religion. There is, I believe, only one Dissenting sect among them; and they became Dissenters because the Dutch Reformed Church was not religious enough even for them. They are known as Doppers, and are popularly supposed to be hostile to the English. I cannot say that this statement corresponds with my experience, for I was always received with great courtesy by the Doppers I visited. They are also said to be dirtier than the other Boers, and stories were told me of old Doppers who wore their leather breeches till they dropped off. These stories were certainly not warranted by what I saw of them. They are very precise in their observance of the Sabbath, and in having family prayers, and they decline to sing anything but Psalms, on the ground that Hymns are the work of man. In other respects they do not appear to differ much from their brethren of the orthodox persuasion.

A Boer has a great reverence for two persons, his doctor and his minister. The ministers command good salaries, and are generally well housed. They are often men of superior education. I heard a ser-

mon by the minister of the church at Pretoria in English. There was occasionally a little quaint slip in the English, but on the whole the sermon was vastly superior to the majority of sermons one hears in the churches at home. Many of the ministers of the Dutch Church in the colony are Scotchmen, who have been tempted from their native mountains to minister to the spiritual wants of the farmers in South Africa. In the better class Boer houses a Bible is always seen, and in conjunction with it I often noticed Bogatsy's "Golden Treasure," and Spurgeon's sermons, in Dutch. No doubt there is some hypocrisy. It seems hopeless to expect complete devotion in any religious system in this dispensation. But, on the whole, the influence of their religion has been powerful for good among the Boers. I firmly believe it has, in many instances, prevented the outlying emigrants from drifting into barbarism. Every respectable Boer is expected to attend Nachtmaal at least once a year; and every young Boer must learn his Catechism, and be admitted to Church fellowship, before he can hope to win the admiring smiles of the opposite sex.

The doctor is also an important element in Boer economy. The diseases which prevail are principally rheumatism, dyspepsia, and eye and skin disease. The latter occurs only where the dirtiness of the patients has induced it. The eye disease is due partly to dirt and partly to the contrast between the dark houses and the vivid sun outside. The rheumatism results principally, I think, from the diet, which consists almost entirely of meat, and is devoid

of fish or vegetables. It may also be caused by the coldness of the nights during the summer, in contrast with the mid-day heat, and the cool winds which blow during the winter months. The most frequent disease is dyspepsia, which arises from a variety of causes, perhaps chiefly from laziness, combined with bad water, bad coffee, and too great a preponderance of meat in the diet. The Boer is very backward at expending money on anything but his health; but if there is a doctor in the neighbourhood, he will have him in at any price if anything goes wrong.

The language in vogue among the Boers and the semi-civilised native tribes of South Africa is a *patois* of Dutch, known as Kitchen Dutch. It contains a considerable proportion of Hottentot and English words, but the groundwork is Dutch, from which the inflections have been largely removed. When speaking to our boys about the oxen, we never used to say, "Waar zijn de ossen?" ("Where are the oxen?") but "Waar is de osse?" using the singular for the plural. Another example may be furnished in the sentence "The sheep have not yet come." In Dutch this would be "De schaapen zijn nog niet gekommen." The Boer is "De schaape is nog niet gekom nie." The double negative is particularly noticeable. I think there can be no doubt that it is derived from the Huguenot settlers. Kitchen Dutch is a barbarous and uncouth dialect, and I observed with pleasure that it was giving place to English. It is necessary to know a few words of it to use when on the trek, because both in the Free

State and the Transvaal the farmers are very shy at speaking in English, and a want of knowledge of the language leads to misunderstandings.

The Boers have a good deal of cunning of a small sort. They are decidedly "near" at a small transaction, and in settling a bargain they will haggle for hours over a few shillings. This arises from fear of being overreached, and like the same peculiarity amongst uneducated persons at home, it often results in their being cheated in larger dealings. For example, one of my companions in the coach from Bloemfontein to Port Elizabeth (of which more hereafter) told me that a Boer came to his store at Kimberley with some bundles of tobacco for sale. The Boer had carefully weighed them over with some antique scales which had descended from some remote ancestor. The storekeeper reweighed the bundles, and finding the scales belonging to the Boer gave short weight, he suggested that they should take the store scales as the standard for computing the price, which was so much a pound. "No," said the Boer, "these were my father's scales and he was a wise man and was never cheated, and I won't use anybody elses." The storekeeper drily remarked that he did not press the matter, since he found himself a gainer by £12 in consequence of the Boer sticking to his scales.

The Boer ideas of England are very primitive. An Englishman was one day wishing to impress upon a Boer the greatness of Her Majesty, and told him what an immense number of rooms there

were in the Queen's palace. The Boer would not believe it, but when he was assured the Englishman was correct, he exclaimed, with a delightful reference to the up-country fashion of ornamenting the mud floors of the houses, "Why it must take a day to smear them all!" Another Boer was told what a big city London was, and what a number of inhabitants it contained. He appeared lost in thought for some time, but at length he made the profound remark, "They will want a couple of hundred sheep killed every day for their food."

The Boer habits with regard to deaths and marriages are peculiar. Wood is so scarce in many parts of the country that it is impossible to obtain a coffin at a moment's notice: the Boer consequently keeps a coffin in stock ready for use when wanted. The coffin is generally placed under the bed on which the prospective occupier sleeps. A pleasant companion for a dark night! Some of the Boers are too economical to waste such a good box, and it very often happens that it becomes a receptacle of the goods of the living till it is required for the body of the dead.

Boer courtships and marriages have their oddities. The Boers nearly always marry young. As soon as a young man passes his examination in religious knowledge, he takes stock of all the marriageable lasses in the neighbourhood, and when he has found one to his liking he pays a state visit to the house of the fair creature's parents, and undergoes what is called an "opzit." There is a meritorious magazine published at Bloemfontein con-

taining articles contributed from various quarters of the Free State. One number of the magazine which I brought home with me contains a story of an opzit, so racily told by an eye-witness, that I am sure my readers will thank me for presenting part of the article in the writer's own words.

He was paying a visit to a Dopper named Van der Walt, and after describing his welcome by the father and mother, and their children and grandchildren, he goes on with his story. The reader will observe the Kitchen Dutch :—

"The customary cup of coffee is handed me by the daughter of the house, the sweet 'Grietje,' who had dressed herself in imitation of the English fashion, much to her good old father's disgust, who looked upon green belts and yellow buckles, gaudy hair-nets, and crinolines as pitfalls prepared by the devil. I was discussing the weather and state of the crops with the old man, when my eyes and thoughts were diverted to a youth who now entered the room, dressed in the height of Boer fashion; the smirk upon whose face showed that he thought himself 'no end of a swell,' and he was perfectly justified in his conceit.

"His trousers waved in voluminous folds about his ancles, which were devoid of any covering save what Nature and his native soil had granted him; his 'veldschoens' (veld-shoes) were made of the whitest leather, and finished after the most approved style by his own manly hands; his necktie!—my eyes slowly wandering from his 'veldschoens' upwards, past the vivid pattern of the trousers,

were suddenly startled, fascinated by the glories of *that* necktie! Some great authority on dress has said that a man, if he wishes to look well, should have some one article of his attire as perfect in taste and look as possible; that, in fact, he should have a dress centre, as it were, to attract the eye of the beholder. In the young man before me I saw this theory practically illustrated, although from top to toe, from his beforementioned 'veldschoens' to his well oiled head, he looked smart. The climax of his attire was certainly concentrated in the tie; from its large folds flashed forth all the colours of the rainbow, with a few more added—yellow and green, purple and silver and scarlet shot forth their united rays in one continuous gleam, till at last the eyes which gazed were dazzled and refused to look away. I don't know how long I might have remained fascinated by the sight, but the spell was broken by his 'Dag oom,' and then he removed that necktie from beyond my vision. I soon discovered that the wearer of all this finery was on a courting expedition, and that the necktie and the rest of his attractions were meant to dazzle and enchain the eyes and heart of Grietje, my host's young daughter.

"It is a custom among the Boers—or perhaps I ought to say it was a custom, for the march of progress has swept away many things that were familiar to people in the old days—for lovers to delay their billing and cooing until the rest of the family had retired to rest. This is an arrangement that undoubtedly has its advantages, not only

to the lovers but also to those who have otherwise to bear the misery of their silent presence, to witness their interchange of stolen glances, their stifled sighs, their ogling, and all the other ills that making love is heir to. No, the young Boer, when he loves, never shows the depth of his feeling outwardly; he stoically resists all manifestations of the suffering Cupid's votaries are generally supposed to be subject to, until quietness and peace reign throughout the house. He and his fair one are seated alone in the 'voorhuis,' undisturbed by prying eyes, their feelings mayhap soothed by the sonorous music made by the old father's nose in the adjoining bedroom. I have often been curious to know how the young 'vrijer,' or lover, manages to make known to the fair one his wish to 'opzit,' or sit up, for the purpose of courting. With engaged couples it is doubtless an understood thing; but when, for the first time, a youth ventures on an expedition of this kind, he is generally much too bashful to speak before others to any girl. I know that the young man in this instance—and who, by-the-bye, rejoiced in the name of Hans Venter—had, from the time of his entrance until we all retired to bed, never opened his lips to Grietje, and still, when bedtime came, she seemed to be aware of what was expected of her, and had placed two wax candles on the table in honour of the occasion.

"I have been told that the following is the way in which the bashful lover conveys his desire to 'opzit,' although I cannot vouch for the truth thereof. My informant is a man who has lived all

his life amongst Boers, and ought to know all about them and their ways.

"When bedtime comes, the young Lothario takes up his position near the door through which he knows his inamorata will pass out, after saying goodnight. Just as she is about passing him, he, carefully balancing himself on one foot, stretches the other out high in front of her, and thus cleverly bars the way. This is a declaration, if not of positive love, at least of love, and marriage in perspective, and of a wish to 'opzit, en een beetje vrij.'

"I did not see my friend Hans indulge in the above performance, nor, to my knowledge, did he so comport himself; if he did, poor Grietje was not to be envied, for however manly the proportion of her lover's hints may have been, his leg, in a refined point of view, was not a leg for close inspection. That may, however, be a matter of taste, and, in love matters especially, one can never account for that, so I will not question the taste of fair Grietje in this. One thing is, however, certain, whatever mode he employed to inform her of his wish, Hans Venter and Grietje van der Walt did 'opzit' and did 'vrij,' and I was the unwilling and unseen witness and listener in this way.

"It had been my intention to return to Colesberg after resting some hours, but my host would not hear of my doing so on foot. He at once sent for his horses, in order that I might ride in on one of them; but before they were found a thunderstorm came on, which lasted till the evening, and I was thus compelled to stay with my friends until next morning.

"Knowing me to be an 'uitlander,' my host also knew my prejudices against sharing a bed with two or three bedfellows, which with the Boers is a customary practice, and for which they have a predilection. A bed had therefore been made for me on the floor of a small room leading out of the 'voorhuis,' the door of which had evidently been made too large for the frame, and resisted every effort to shut it. As the bed had been made in such a way that its occupant had a full view of the 'voorhuis,' and everything in it, I could not help seeing the loving pair. This was unfortunate for them, but still more so for me—at least, so I thought, for, like others of the human species, I like to take off my clothes before going to bed; but, under existing circumstances, this was impossible. I wasted many an anxious thought on the accomplishment of this difficult task. My jacket and vest were easily removed, but then—no stratagem would avail, as the occupants of the other room were not six paces from me. So at last, with a sigh, I resigned myself to a hard fate, and got between the sheets Boer fashion,—*i.e.*, ready to get up and march at a moment's notice. Sleep was, however, out of the question, and so I became an involuntary listener to what was passing before my eyes, though in the next room.

"The fair Grietje was sitting in one corner of the room, whereas the stolid though resplendent Hans was seated on the 'rustbank,' smoking a short wooden pipe, which he sucked with great vehemence, doubtless thinking thus to get inspired with ideas to begin his wooing, but the inspiration



DISTANT VIEW OF PRAETORIA.

seemed a long time coming, for not a sound escaped his lips, except when removing his pipe from his mouth, he gave a loud click with his tongue against his teeth and expectorated, aiming at and hitting his mark at a great distance. This performance he repeated over and over again, and, however interested the fair Grietje may have been in watching it to me it became monotonous. My eyelids were just closing in slumber when Grietje, doubtless thinking that this kind of love-making was rather slow, herself began the conversation, and in a characteristic manner.

"'Is het ook so droog bij julle,' she said, 'hier het dit nog nooit gereen, nie voor de laaste zes maanden nie?'*

"'Ja, Nichtje,' was the laconic response of the lover, who merely removed his pipe to utter the words, then clicked, expectorated, and resumed his pipe.

"'Ik hoor dat die nieuwe Predikant zal aankomende Nachtmaal vorgestel worre; zal jij ook daar wees?'† inquired Grietje, changing the subject.

"'Ik denk so, Grietje.'‡

"'Ik hoor hij is nog ongetrouwd.'§ The sly puss, with a woman's innate cleverness, was bringing the conversation round to a more interesting point; however, as yet she had not gained much, for a phlegmatic 'Ja-a-a' was all the answer of the impassioned swain.

* Is it as dry with you; it hasn't rained here at all for the last six months?
† I hear the new Minister will be inducted at the next "Nachtmaal;" will you be there?
‡ I think so.
§ I hear he is unmarried.

"'Dat ken tog nie lekker wees, voor een Predikant om ongetrouwd te wees—hij moet alte jaloers worde op de mans wat mooi meisjes voor vrouwens vat, as hij voor hulle mot trouw, wat denk jij, Hans?'*

"But Hans, instead of taking advantage of this splendid opening afforded him, only answered, 'Maar ik weet toch nie.'†

"This seemed too much for poor Grietje even, and she relapsed into silence, and again the only sound I heard was the measured puff, puff, of Hans smoking and, at intervals, the click of the tongue as he fired another shot; but no, this was not all the noise, for a sound like the distant rumbling of thunder, intermingled with the snarling of dogs, gave notice that old Van der Walt, although oblivious of sublunary things, was enjoying himself in Dreamland.

"At last Hans' pipe was out. Removing it from his mouth, after he had given it a final puff to prove it was really smoked out, he knocked the ashes from it by beating it against his 'veldschoen,' then he clicked, and expectorated once again, rose up, and approaching Grietje, he, without preface or outward emotion, calmly said, 'Weet je, Grietje, ik het jou regte lief, wil je met mij trouw?'‡

"I have but little more to tell. I got very sleepy on it all, and the last thing I remember was a sound that was neither click nor snore, but I felt

* It cannot be nice for a Minister to be unmarried—he must get so jealous of all the men who take the prettiest girls for their wives, especially as he has to marry them—don't you think so, Hans?

† I really don't know.

‡ You know, Grietje, I love you very much, will you marry me?

too sleepy to analyze it, and cannot now explain the cause; perhaps my fair readers will be able to surmise the origin. As for me, I slept, and saw no more.

" Some months afterwards, walking up the street in —berg, I espied my two lovers walking hand-in-hand, as is the custom with engaged couples amongst the Boers, and they informed me that on the morrow they were to be married."

## CHAPTER X.

### THE VAAL RIVER TO PRETORIA.

We crossed the Vaal River in the morning by a shallow serpentine drift, which turned on itself like the letter S. The stream was nearly fifty yards in width at the point where we crossed, but it nowhere came up to the bottom of the waggon. There was a "pont" a little lower down, which we could have used if necessary. The banks of the river sloped gradually down till near the water's edge, where they broke off abruptly in small cliffs. The part above the cliffs was covered with trees, and teemed with bird and insect life.

It was two o'clock before we got our dinner, which we ate with all the fervour of Britons who once more trod a soil over which waved the flag of their country. We did not, however, observe any change in the aspect of the landscape, save a few oxen grazing here and there suggestive of beef, and offering a welcome sight to men exceedingly tired of mutton, mutton, for dinner.

Our late start prevented us getting into Potchefstroom before dusk. We deemed it advisable not to cross the Mooi River after dark, and we outspanned for the night a little short of it.

Next morning we crossed the river, in which I noticed the first really transparent water I had

seen for months. The name "Mooi" or "pretty" is probably derived from the beautiful water. It was a treat to lean over the bank, and watch fish darting about in the pellucid stream. The rivers we had hitherto crossed were almost invariably turbid, and the fish lurked in the mud, and were only to be got at by the aid of dynamite, or some similar poaching trick. An angler of a righteous turn of mind would have a sinecure in South Africa.

About half-an-hour after leaving the Mooi River drift, we reached the outskirts of Potchefstroom. From the distance the town looked like a large square garden, hardly a house being visible. We had a long distance to trek down the broad main street before we arrived at the Market Square, where we intended to outspan. The square was very large and grown over with grass, which gave it the appearance of a village common. One portion of it was occupied by the Dutch Church, a dingy cruciform building roofed with thatch.

Potchefstroom was planned by Boers with large ideas, who were determined to carry the national love of isolation into practice, even in laying out their capital city. The streets are very wide. The "erven" or blocks of property, one of each of which was allotted to the original holders, are one hundred feet square. I was told the main street was three miles long. It certainly is a tremendous length, but I think it was drawn out a little for my benefit. The erven are not by any means all built upon. The unbuilt spaces are mostly used as gardens. The gardens abounded with trees, among which the

graceful willow and blue gum were predominant. The hedges were composed of rose and fig trees. Orange trees were to be seen everywhere mixed with other fruit trees, the fruit of which often lay rotting on the ground, neglected because of its very profusion. Clear streams of water from the Mooi River ran down the sides of the streets. Altogether the aspect of the place was very inviting.

The houses were perhaps the least remarkable things in the town. They were only one story high, and had thatched roofs. I was informed there were only a few boarded floors in the place. The population is about 3,000. I made the height above sea level 4,450 feet. Dr. Leach, who was here in the wet weather makes it 4,780 feet.

I met several good friends at Potchefstroom, and I was successful in finding at home a gentleman I had a desire to meet. I mean Mr. J. B. Ayres, who I am sure will pardon my giving his name in full, and whom I should recommend every person with any taste for natural history who finds himself at Portchefstroom, to call upon. I will not shock Mr. Ayres' modesty by dwelling further upon his acquirements, but I must say I was glad to find "the" ornithologist of the Transvaal at home in his own quarters. During my stay, I had a little walk with Mr. Ayres to inspect some otter traps on the Mooi River. To get at the traps we had to cross a huge swamp, which bounds Potchefstroom on one side, in whose bogs and reeds lurk innumerable wild fowl. A gentleman, whose acquaintance I was also happy to make, shot six brace of snipe in the swamp

one afternoon while I was in Potchefstroom. The swamp appeared to me to be rather a makeweight against Potchefstroom as a residence for people with bad lungs. Mr. Ayres told me that water was obtainable anywhere in the town by digging a few feet under the surface; and I am much afraid that notwithstanding its charming appearance, it must yield the palm to many upland towns as a healthy resort. I got two or three birds on my way to the otter traps, and a snipe's egg, which came to an untimely end. For safe keeping I placed it in a handkerchief in my hat. After getting back to Potchefstroom we met some ladies, to whom I was introduced. I lifted my hat as in duty bound, and out dropped the egg, "and all the king's horses and all the king's men" could not have made that an egg again.

Mr. Ayres' garden was full of little bright honey birds darting about here and there in the sunlight like humming birds. He told me he had got a large proportion of the birds, which he has collected from time to time and sent to England, within the environs of Potchefstroom itself. The swamp has furnished one or two species previously unknown to science, and one of them has been named after Mr. Ayres.

There are two hotels in Potchefstroom. At both the food was plentiful and good, but the accommodation, as in most of the up-country hotels, was hardly up to English ideas of comfort. We dined once or twice at the "Royal," which is the largest, and had the pleasure of helping to reduce the

dimensions of a juicy sirloin of beef. Beef was threepence per pound at the butcher's, and for two or three days after our arrival in the Transvaal, we could eat nothing but the newly-discovered meat.

Before we left, we had a cabinet council as to our future movements. I was very anxious to return *viâ* the borders of Zululand and Natal to Bloemfontein. We were strongly advised by friends not to take that way home, partly in consequence of the attitude of Ketchwayo, who was making himself troublesome, and partly on account of the cold on Drakensberg. We were told it was unlikely the Zulus would do anything to our persons, but it was very possible, in the disturbed state of the frontier, they might take a fancy to our waggon and belongings. The cold was represented, and I have no doubt correctly, as exceedingly acute on the summit of the mountain range, and we were informed we might very probably meet with snow. The Doctor pooh-poohed Ketchwayo, but thought the danger from cold was much more serious. He had been exceedingly unwell since we left Bloemfontein, and his state at Potchefstroom was not reassuring. Much as I should have liked to have seen Natal and the Zulus, I was compelled to give way, when I came to think of his health. At length, we determined to turn west instead of east on reaching Pretoria, and to trek back *viâ* Rustenburg. I was a little reconciled to this decision on hearing that Mr. Ayres and a friend of his were about to proceed to Rustenburg on a collecting expedition, and that we might come across them there. We stayed six days at Potchefstroom. We left on

the evening of April 29th, in company with Mr. W who was journeying to Pretoria. Before leaving, we arranged with some friends at Potchefstroom to have a joint picnic at Wonderfontein, where there were some limestone caves worth seeing. We were to proceed leisurely, and they would catch us up in an ox waggon somewhere on the way. We hardly covered any ground the first day, the object in leaving in the afternoon being to get our boys out of the enticements of Potchefstroom, so as to make a clear start in the morning.

Our mid-day outspan next day was at a place called Stampoor Fontein, where we met with the only sullen reception experienced at the hands of any Boer in the Transvaal. Even Mr. W's persuasive tongue failed to extract any provisions from the "huisvrouw," who kept herself in dignified silence in the interior of her dwelling. I dare say the Boers had been tricked by some of the English gentry from the Diamond Fields. During our afternoon trek, we noticed the veld on fire in many places. The Boers burn the old grass in order to provide a young growth for their cattle; but the practice is productive of many accidents, and is largely responsible for the general destruction of the trees throughout the country.

Our Potchefstroom friends drove up in the evening, after many adventures with an unruly span of oxen, and we outspanned side by side for the night.

Next morning I was waked by the waggon starting. I lay rolling about on the cartel, watching a

star shining through a hole in the front klap, and wondering why it shone so brightly, and why the day was so long in dawning. Presently we stopped for coffee, and the mystery was unravelled. I found the waggons had been quietly started at half-past one instead of our usual hour, half-past four. While we were getting our coffee, the Judge of the Supreme Court passed us, on his way to hold a circuit court at Potchefstroom, in an ox cart. Fancy one of our Judges at home going circuit in an ox cart! His Lordship, as he is called in court, is a young judge—quite a chicken when compared with our venerable sages of the law in England—but he is an excellent lawyer and quite master of his position.

We reached Wonderfontein about half-past nine, and had breakfast on a table cloth, "all proper," on the veld in great style, the fowl and ham of orthodox picnics not being wanting. A snake, about three feet in length, was discovered in a hole close to our breakfast table, and we had the savage pleasure of killing it. After breakfast we proceeded to inspect one of the caves. It was the smallest of the two, and had only been discovered very recently. The other and larger cave was the one usually visited, but we heard that the smaller one was much prettier, and we determined to honour it with our presence.

The entrance was situate in a depression in the veld. The rocks surrounding the entrance appeared to be magnesian limestone. The descent into the cave was precipitous, running down a sort

of shaft or well. Some of our party knotted a number of oxhide riems together, and having tied them to a tree, let them down the shaft, so as to give the weakly members something to hold by. Lawton was strongly advised not to try the descent, but, with his usual pluck, he would go down, and when he got back to the surface he was dead beaten. Another of the party, a lady of somewhat corpulent proportions, was also dissuaded from going, but go she would, and go she did. How she managed to get down and up again is a mystery, particularly as there was a large stone half way which had to be crawled over. When she emerged from the black hole she was a little crumpled, but as vivacious and merry as ever.

The bottom of the shaft opened into a large hall with the usual array of fantastically-shaped stalactites and stalagmites. Some of the former emitted musical sounds. I have seen larger caves in Derbyshire, but none so beautiful in their proportions and the forms of the limestone deposits.

After a dinner together outside the cave we said good-bye to our friends. They returned to Potchefstroom, while we went on our way to Pretoria. When we outspanned for the night we had only enough water for one small cup of coffee each, and our boys had to do without.

Next morning Mr. W started the waggons between three and four, and the day after at a quarter to five. The first day was without incident. On getting out of the waggon on the morning of the second day I found we were getting into pretty

scenery. We were again on limestone, broken into cliffs, weathered into picturesque outlines, and sprinkled with bush. About mid-day we crossed a ridge on which my aneroid marked 5,200 feet, from which there was an extensive view before and behind. The hills were sparsely studded with single bushes growing at intervals like the wool on the head of a Koranna or Hottentot. Some gold diggings had just been "rushed" a little to our right, and Mr. W commenced a search among the bits of stone on the road side, but did not succeed in finding any gold. I hear since my return to England that the diggings have been worked since, but without much success. They are known as the Blaauwbank mines.

We began now to see numbers of the Mahowa or Mantatee natives, who appear to be the original inhabitants of the Transvaal. We passed a Mahowa kraal some distance to the left. But I defer a description for the present.

Next day we were off at three. We were getting tired of the hard work of starting early, especially as William drove us so unskilfully that it was impossible to lay on the cartel without serious abrasions of prominent points of our bodies, caused by our rolling about. This morning the driving was particularly bad. We stood it for half-an-hour, and then being worn out of all patience, we ordered him to stop, and let Mr. W go on. I got out at sun-up, and found we were almost in a spruit, and the boys fast asleep. At seven we made a new start, and outspanned on the further side of a stream called

Yokeskey River. There was a farm near us, and as we were now on our own resources, I had to brush up my bad Dutch to buy some provisions. We found William was quite helpless in the absence of Mr. W's boys, and we determined to get rid of him at the first opportunity. At half-past one we outspanned and made a straight trek into Pretoria, which we reached at half-past eight. The country was hilly and not easy for oxen, and we felt we had done a feat when we completed the day's work. We had accomplished quite thirty miles—a very long trek. On the way we passed Mr. W, who wanted us to stay with him for the night; but our blood was up, and we wished to show him what our cattle could do, and we pressed on.

The way into the town led down a gorge, which we traversed in the dark, getting bumped over a number of stones by William. Just outside the houses, we saw through the darkness the white tents of a British regiment, which brought home forcibly to our thoughts. We outspanned in the Market Square, and were glad to retire to rest after our long day.

The following day was Sunday, and on turning out in the morning we found several waggons in the square belonging to Boers who had come to church. The church itself was in the middle of the square, and was a trifle more woebegone than the one at Potchefstroom. The square was grass grown in parts only, and had a dirty appearance. The buildings were of all sizes, some with thatched roofs, and some with roofs of corrugated iron; and one or two

were constructed wholly of that hideous material. There was a neglected look about everything, which contrasted unfavourably with Potchefstroom. A walk in the town did not mend our first impressions. On the map Pretoria is a square, trim-looking place. In reality the square blocks are only partially filled in, and the buildings are dropped everywhere, according to the sweet wild will of the original builders, who have also consulted their individual taste in their dwellings. The English occupation has created a great demand for houses, and building was going on during our stay ; but the new houses only seemed to reproduce the fitfulness of the older erections in a more glaring style. The unoccupied erven and parts of erven were being filled in by the kindly hand of Nature, and rose and orange trees occupied gaps, and helped to redeem the appearance of what would otherwise be an ugly town. Furrows of water intersected the streets, as at Potchefstroom, but the water in them appeared to be applied to so many uses that we were very careful not to drink any of it. The water supply is derived from the river Aapies, which is a branch of the Limpopo. There is plenty of water in the driest season, and of the best quality, but as it flows through the town it goes on collecting impurity after impurity, and before it reaches the river again it spreads itself out and makes a swamp, which will breed an attack of fever some fine day. But for this, and the absence of other easily applied sanitary arrangements, Pretoria would be perhaps the healthiest town in South Africa. Things have been

in such an unsettled condition during the last three or four years, that there is some excuse for the neglect; but now that the capture of Ketchwayo has given reasonable expectation of a permanent peace to South Africa, it is to be hoped the burghers will direct their attention to the sanitary state of the town. Meantime Pretoria must give place to Bloemfontein as a residence for invalids.

The hotels in Pretoria were under the mark. A good restaurant was opened while we were there, but the leading hotel was a dirty place, where I should have been reluctant to spend a night. There were four hotels in the place, however, and it is possible that some of the others might have been better. It is probable that the influx of English inhabitants, occasioned by the annexation, will result in some improvement in this respect.

The rent of houses was exceedingly dear. A one-storied house with a kitchen, parlour, and two or three bedrooms fetched a hundred a year. I hope the dearness of building materials and labour will not occasion the building of any more iron houses. The town would then become irredeemably ugly.

On Sunday evening I went to the Dutch Church, the pastor of which was holding an English service. There is an Anglican Church, and since I left a Bishop has been sent out. There is also a Wesleyan Chapel, a Dopper Church, a German Lutheran Church, and a Roman Catholic Church.

We had an introduction to the Wesleyan minister, and on Monday we went with him to visit the source of the river which supplies water to Pretoria. The

water springs out of the ground by means of several fonteins, situate under a group of lime trees lying at the junction of two or three valleys, and in the midst of scenery not altogether unlike a bit of Derbyshire. We came back from the fonteins by a different road. On the way we passed a place on the banks of the river where there had been some feeble attempts at digging for gold, but without much success. We had to go partly round Pretoria to get at a drift where we could cross the river. The view of the town from the opposite bank was pleasing to the eye. The river occupied the foreground. Gently sloping meadows of grass led down to the river side, which was overshadowed with trees. In the middle distance lay Pretoria on a gradually rising piece of ground, the white houses peeping here and there through breaks in the green mantle of foliage. Behind all was the Magaliesberg range of mountains, the straight and monotonous forms of which were broken by the more varied outlines of a lesser range of hills. The whole picture was bathed in the golden rays of a sun setting in a perfectly cloudless sky. While the spell of beauty hung over me, I was tempted to retract my harsh opinions of Pretoria. But the golden glory departed. A nearer acquaintance with the town brought out the defects which distance had concealed, and the old impressions returned.

We spent a longer time at Pretoria than we had intended, partly in consequence of difficulties with our boys. We parted with William to our mutual liking; for we learnt after his departure, much to our

astonishment, through the medium of Mr. W's boys, that he was mortally afraid of us two invalids, and had been in continual fear lest we should have him put in prison as we had done Benjamin at Kroonstad. In his place we engaged a boy, who was recommended to us in three several quarters as the "best" boy in Pretoria. I do not know what the other boys might be, but the best boy belied his reputation by becoming frightfully drunk during the day, and by getting lodged in the "tronk" for the night. We were told that if we paid to get him out of gaol, we should still find him the "best" boy. We had our doubts, however, and were pleased when one of the gentlemen who recommended the best boy to us, and who saw we did not care to have him again, let us have one of his own boys to take us as far as Potchefstroom on our way back. Rudolph, as he was called, was a School Kaffir, that is, he had been educated by some German missionaries. Colonists have a strong dislike to missionary educated natives, and we were told he would be continually cheating us. I am bound to say the reverse proved to be the case. He was an intelligent and obedient lad, and if he had only known English he would have made a most excellent servant. As it was, he managed to understand my broken Dutch and signs exceedingly well.

We parted with Mr. W at Pretoria. With his usual volatility, he gave up trading in cheap jewellery for a scheme of raising a corps of coolies to serve against Sekkukuni. He returned to the Diamond Fields with that object, in great haste. I am afraid

his scheme came to naught. I have not been able to hear of any coolie volunteers among the troops serving in the Transvaal.

Whilst we were at Pretoria, I paid a visit to Sir Theophilus Shepstone's house, but unfortunately I called at mid-day, when all the household were enjoying a siesta, and I failed to make anyone sensible of my presence, though I knocked my hardest. Sir Theophilus had just returned from the Zulu border, where he had had a stormy interview with Ketchwayo. The reports we heard of the attitude of that black dignitary reconciled me more to our change of plans, though many of the English in Pretoria ridiculed the idea of a Zulu rising.

Sir Theophilus was being shamefully abused in one of the Transvaal papers, which in a moment of pique had declared war on the Government. The paper did not hesitate to accuse the Governor of setting on the Zulus to declare war against the Boers, with a view of affording a pretext for annexing the Transvaal. In addition to this vile charge, it charged Sir Theophilus with nepotism in the appointment of his officers, with shirking his duties at Pretoria, and with a thousand other cruel accusations. I regret to say that I came across one Englishman who was circulating a memorial among the Boers, reiterating some of these scandalous charges. Political morality is at a low ebb in the Transvaal. Before the annexation, the country was a Cave of Adullam for those who were in debt or difficulty in other parts of South Africa, and the remains and traditions of the old *régime* still cling to its skirts.

## CHAPTER XI.

### PRETORIA TO BLOEMFONTEIN.

We left Pretoria on the Friday following our arrival. We were accompanied a short distance by our friend the Wesleyan minister, whose hospitality we had enjoyed in Pretoria. We hoped at one time to have had his company as far as Rustenburg, but he was compelled to return at once, in consequence of an errand of mercy which required his immediate presence. Before our departure I bought a dark tent and laid in a stock of chemicals for wet plate photography. Hitherto I had been photographing with Beechey dry plates, but the results, through defects either in the artist or the plates, had hardly been satisfactory.

We crossed the small range of hills between Pretoria and the Magaliesberg Mountains, and then turned off to the right down the valley between Witwaters Rand and the mountains. We stopped for lunch on the banks of the Aapies River, which cuts through both the hills and the mountains, finding its way athwart the latter by a narrow gorge called Wonderboom Poort. Our friend left us here, much to our regret.

Next day we arrived at the place where we were to cross the mountains. The road runs over a depression known as Selekatse's Nek, so called after the

great Matabili chief. The south side of the nek was covered with fresh green trees nearly up to the top. The actual passage was guarded by massive buttresses of rock on either hand, one of which presented a frowning precipitous face to the pass. About half-way up, we came across a transport waggon stuck in the middle of the road. In a country like South Africa, where you yourself may need help at any moment, it is the height of churlishness to pass a brother in distress. We accordingly offered the stranger the loan of our bullocks, and he accepted the offer with thanks. While our boys were helping his to yoke the oxen, I went on to the top of the pass, and clambered up a low cliff overhanging the road. The face of the cliff was broken towards the north; I got up without difficulty, and even the Doctor, who had improved during the last two or three days, was able to scramble up part of the way. The view from the top was magnificent. Looking back towards the south I saw the steep road, up which we had ascended, winding downwards till it was lost among the trees. Before me was the valley leading to Pretoria, bare of trees, but covered with grass, and backed by the rounded summits of the Witwaters Rand rising one above another, their circular tops sparsely sprinkled with a few mimosa bushes. Right and left ran the mountains of the Magaliesberg, their precipices and flat sky outline giving the idea of some huge artificial rampart erected by the tribes of the north to keep out the ever advancing white man. Turning the other way, and looking north, a different scene met the eye.

Before me lay a rich plain thickly covered with trees ; some miles across the plain were a number of hills of picturesque contour, wooded to the very top. Through gaps in the nearer hills I could discern more and more hills half hidden in haze. The northern slopes of the Magaliesberg were totally unlike the southern; they declined downwards in gentle slopes covered with wood, and rounded into undulations. The contrast between ruggedness and force on one side, and softness and grace on the other, must have struck the most casual observer. The country before us was part of the Bush veld; that over which we had been trekking was the Hooge (or high) veld. The slopes of the mountains are known as the Banken (or terrace) veld. It is the Hooge veld which will be the future home of the English settlers. The climate of the Bush veld is too soft, and at the same time too dangerous for the hard-working white man. The Hooge veld occupies the Southern portion of the Transvaal, and the part bordering on Zululand, where it reaches an elevation of 6,000 feet. I need hardly say that the Hooge veld is also the country for invalids.

Our oxen, and those of the transport rider combined, failing to draw up his heavy laden waggon, he was compelled to take them out and send for help to a neighbouring farm, the owner of which made a trade of assisting to drag waggons up the steep road. Our Samaritan conduct lost us an hour, but we did not regret the loss. On reaching the bottom of the nek on the opposite side we found ourselves on a narrow road running through

thick trees. At times we could hardly see our leading oxen as they moved slowly and ponderously along the windings of the road. What we should have done if we had met another waggon in the narrow part I do not know, one or other would have had to back out.

Beyond the thick trees we came to a fertile country with Kaffir kraals and patches of mealies, or maize, here and there. Every now and then we met strings of natives looking jolly and well fed. Both sexes were clothed in a negative fashion, the dress of the women especially consisting of large bracelets, armlets, necklaces, and what I suppose ought to be called "leglets" of copper and beads, plus a small apron before and behind. Several of the men had karosses which they wore with the wool inside, it being winter. We, personally, found the climate quite warm. We had observed a marked change after crossing the mountain range. On the other side it had latterly been cold at night, and in the morning there was frost on the ground. Here, on the contrary, the air was mild, and we did not feel cold again till we recrossed the Magaliesberg. The hair, or rather wool, on the men's heads was shaved round the ears and some way up the back of the head. Rudolph informed us this was the tribal badge of the Mahowas, and showed us his own woolly poll in confirmation. I practised Dutch upon him largely, and ascertained, after numerous attempts, that our road lay through the place where he had been educated. He could read and write Kaffir, and he produced a dog's-eared primer

in that tongue, with a great deal of satisfaction. He was very sharp, but notwithstanding his readiness, we found it awkward getting on with Swartboy as interpreter. I had long suspected our forelooper's English to be a delusion, and my suspicions were now confirmed. We did get on somehow—sometimes by Dutch, sometimes by English, but more frequently by the universal language of signs.

We outspanned for the night on the banks of the Krokodil, which afterwards becomes the Limpopo, River. After crossing it we took a westerly direction, and proceeded by an in and out road through cone-shaped hills blazing with red and green colours, to a mission settlement called Bethany. There was a large kraal outside the station, and near the kraal I saw a number of natives riding on oxen; the reins were led through the nostrils, and the black riders sat on their steeds comfortably. Above Pretoria it is almost impossible to keep a horse alive until the winter has set in. We saw very few horses in Pretoria itself, and those we saw were horses which had been "saulted," or which had had the sickness, and were therefore supposed to be proof against it. Unfortunately the process takes the grit out of the horse, and a saulted animal has always a more or less mangy appearance. The only exception was a magnificent black horse belonging to one of the officers of the regiment stationed at Pretoria, and which by great care had been preserved from the plague of the district. The horse sickness was, to a great extent, responsible for the Judge of the Supreme Court having to go circuit in an ox-cart.

We stopped at the mission station a short time, and the head missionary came out to greet us. He had a pipe in his hand about a yard long, unmistakably from the Fatherland. I saluted him in German, and he was highly delighted. I went into the house, and had a chat with him, which, greatly to my relief, he allowed to drift into the English language. He was very pressing for us to spend a night with him, but the Doctor insisted on pushing on.

These mission stations are doing good, notwithstanding what may be said to the contrary. All over the country, on the part of both Boers and English alike, there is the strongest possible prejudice against mission efforts, and it requires a personal inspection to dispel the effect of the cloud of abuse showered down upon them. No doubt there is a large percentage of cheats and tricksters among the so-called Christian natives, but are we to cast a stone at them for this reason? We have our training, and the weight of an immense social influence in our favour; but these are all against the native Christian, who has, moreover, to unlearn a host of wickedness, and to relearn a totally new system of pureness and honesty of living. It is true, also, that many of the missionaries are not always the best men for missionary work, and there are undoubtedly self-seekers amongst them. On the whole, however, I am convinced missionary effort has been useful in South Africa, and the more it progresses the more likely are the settlers to live quiet and peaceable lives. A very worthy missionary

—and a very honourable man—who was stationed at Thaba N'chu in the Free State, told me that he believed many of his converts were real Christians. To show me how the principles of honesty had leavened the tribe he was working amongst, and who were not long ago a nation of professed marauders, he told me an anecdote, which requires an acquaintance with the native craving for shiny articles to appreciate properly. When he first went to Thaba N'chu he had twelve silver teaspoons; they were in constant use about the house, and were never locked up—on principle. The natives, who had been taught in their early youth that thieving was a virtue, were constantly in and out of the house, but during a long series of years not one spoon was stolen. When he was packing up his things, previous to leaving, one of the spoons was missed; the whole household turned out in search for it. It was found behind a box, where it had slipped accidentally, and great rejoicings were held over its discovery. I should have liked to have seen the same experiment tried in a Yorkshire or Lancashire village. The German missionaries have been particularly successful in civilising the natives, owing to a rule they have that all their converts must work for their living.

We spent the night at another mission station situated on a stream called Sterkstroom. We had to cross a steep drift to reach the station, and only escaped an upset by a miracle. As it was, our tin canteen, which was slung under the waggon, was torn off the handle. Misfortunes never come alone.

When we went to bed we were both so tired that we forgot to blow out the candle in our lantern. It burnt down, and set fire to an accumulation of candle grease in the bottom of the lantern. The heat melted the solder, and in another moment the waggon would have been on fire, but for the presence of mind of the Doctor. He was awakened by the light, and, seeing the state of things, jerked the whole concern out through the back klap, which was fortunately unfastened, on to the veld, where it broke into a thousand pieces.

We had a very unwonted dish in the morning, namely, pork. The Boers have a strong prejudice against pork, and the circumstance suggested the paternity of the missionary who provided us with it.

The scenery we passed through during the day reminded me of the Bavarian Highlands as seen from the Salzburg Railway, consisting of similar dark green wooded hills, with bare mountains in the background on the one side, and a well wooded plain on the other. The weather was quite hot at mid-day, and we felt as if we had suddenly jumped into summer.

We reached Rustenburg about the middle of the following day, passing some small native kraals and a German farmhouse on the way. We outspanned, as usual, in the Market Square, under the shade of some lofty gum trees. Rustenburg was not distantly unlike Winburg, except that there were mountains in the distance, and a plentiful growth of trees in the village. I visited a garden there for the purpose of buying some oranges. The trees in the garden were literally breaking down with fruit, and I pur-

chased a large sackful of oranges for three shillings. I noticed also shaddocks as big as my head, lemons, loquots, granadillas, bananas, and other fruits quite unknown to me. The proprietor of the garden was a character. He had been a gold-digger in Australia, where he said he "had often had a fortune and spent it." He had also been in the Boer battles with Sekkukuni, and spoke with unmitigated contempt of the cowardice of the Boers, who had run away just when they were on the point of taking the stronghold of the rebel chief. He said he came home in sheer disgust. An attempt was made to collect the war tax from him, but he declined in rather violent terms. I called on him a second time, to get a new lantern in place of the broken one, and found him in a furious state of passion with a young Boer, who had been blustering about driving the British soldiers out of the Transvaal. When I met him he could hardly speak for patriotic indignation, and I believe the Boer had thought it better to retire as quickly as possible from the offended Briton. Rustenburg is surrounded by disaffected Boers, and loyalty is a passion there. It was the first place to unfurl the British flag, which was hoisted by the landrost, a gentleman who cannot speak English! The owner of the garden had tried the Lydenburg gold-fields in the east of the Transvaal, but like every other digger from Lydenburg I came across, he said there was too much work and too little pay. He now was a Good Templar, and had given up his digging habits.

Rustenburg is a Good Templar's Paradise. The

order reigns supreme, and has stamped out all the hotels and drinking bars, so that no drink stronger than herb beer can be got, except wholesale at the stores. It was a remarkable instance, and the only one I met in the country. The Good Templars had a ball during our stay. We went to look on for a bit, and found them dancing with great spirit on coffee and herb beer.

We took advantage of our stay in Rustenburg to visit a neighbouring chief called Magata. We were accompanied by a Rustenburg gentleman and his wife. The trip occupied a day. We found the kraal in a picturesque position on a piece of sloping ground, embosomed amongst green hills. It was not like the Zulu kraals, round, with an open space in the centre, but rather square in shape. The huts were circular, like beehives, and made of mud. We outspanned at the principal entrance, and I got out my photographic things whilst the rest of the party went to visit the chief. My proceedings were watched with interest by a bevy of girls and children, whose tongues clattered like steam engines. The moment I left the camera to go to the dark tent, they crept timidly up to get a nearer glance at the curious machine, but directly I emerged from the folds of the tent, off they all flew, while peals of laughter resounded round the circle. Some of the girls were good looking, and one or two of them would have been really handsome if they had had hair instead of wool, and lips not quite so thick, and especially if they had washed off some of the dirt palpably visible on their shining skins. Near at hand a number of

women were busy building a hut. My lord, the Kaffir, never does any work, considering everything except fighting, hunting, and milking cows, below the dignity of a man. Consequently, the wives get very much put upon, and they are always glad when their master takes other wives to share their burdens. The condition of the women alone is a sufficient argument in favour of the crudest efforts to Christianise the natives.

While I was photographing, the chief came down with my friends. He was very anxious to have his likeness taken, and offered to pay me well for it. I made three several attempts, but the collodion I had bought at Pretoria was bad, and I could do nothing. Seeing that I was put out, he asked our friend, who was interpreting, to say that he hoped I would not be annoyed, for though he should have liked a portrait very much, he saw I had done my best, and he was as much obliged as if I had succeeded. An English gentleman could not have done more.

He was accompanied by a retinue of attendants, among whom was a pretender to the throne of Selekatse, who had taken refuge with him. His Prime Minister was a splendid fellow, of immense proportions, and I conceived a great respect for him, which I only lost when he asked me on the sly for some brandy.

Magata governs about 6,000 people, that form a branch of the great tribe of Mahowas, and who are properly called Mantatees. The word "Mahowa" is a term of contempt applied to them by the more warlike natives of the south. There is an excellent

description of them by my friend Mr. A. G. Watermeyer, in the "Transvaal Almanac" of 1879, from which I take the liberty of culling two or three paragraphs:—

"As a rule, they are a good-natured sort of a people, though excessively idle and stupid, the bulk of the hard work falling to the lot of the women, who cultivate the lands, build the huts, and attend to all those other domestic duties which usually are relegated to their sex, while the men, on the other hand, occupy themselves with their cattle and the preparation of karosses, when not at war, or in the hunting grounds. The men are affectionate towards their wives and treat them kindly, at times even assisting them in their out-door work; in this respect they compare most favourably with the Zulus, Basutos, and Cape Kaffirs, who brutally ill-treat their women, and literally make them their beasts of burden.

"Polygamy is practised, or rather indulged in, universally, there being no limit to the number of wives a man may have, so long as he can afford to pay for them. Among some of the tribes the wife is paid for in cattle, the price varying from five to ten, or even fifteen cows; among others, again, where cattle are scarce, she is bought by the 'pick,' which is a standard of value equivalent to two fathoms of calico, or a certain number of brass rings, and as many as sixty picks are sometimes demanded by a father as the price of his daughter. With very rare exceptions, the native women may be looked upon as the pattern of virtue and chastity,

infidelity being almost unknown; any departure from this rule is severely punished, at times even with death. Notwithstanding polygamy, it is surprising to find that large families of children are almost unknown, five to six being the general limit. This may be owing to the great mortality among infants; it may also be due to an inviolable rule among the natives, which enjoins separation between husband and wife during pregnancy and till weaning. The precarious lives led by the men renders old age rather infrequent. Though not giving one the idea of possessing great physical strength, they yet are gifted with remarkable powers of endurance, and, though by no means of a muscular build, it is surprising what feats many of them will perform on the very poorest possible description of nourishment. Organic disease is rare, with the exception of affections of the lungs, from which many suffer; contagious disease is almost unknown, except in a few solitary instances, where civilisation has introduced it. Circumcision is practised, both sexes having to undergo the rites on attaining the age of puberty, but so careful are the natives that no white man should witness the ceremony, that next to nothing is known of what takes place on the occasion. They have a peculiar and equally secret manner of burying their dead; the men are interred in the cattle kraals in a sitting posture; the women they bury in their huts, and the children in some convenient spot outside; the resting places of their dead are not specially distinguishable. The native laws of inheritance are somewhat

remarkable. On the death of a father of a family, the cattle, household goods, wives, children, in fact all he possessed, goes to the eldest surviving brother of the deceased man, whose sole property they become, and who, in turn, is compelled to support the new addition to his establishment; the daughters, however, being marketable commodities, are often a valuable acquisition.

"Religion, in the civilised acceptation of the term, the native, as a rule, knows not, except in those comparatively few cases in which the labours of the missionary have come to his rescue. Some of the tribes possess no form of worship even, others again have a coloured post, very nearly resembling a barber's pole, planted in their cattle kraals, and which is looked upon with reverence and awe, without, however, worshipping it, nor is it believed that any supernatural powers are ascribed to its presence. As a rule, the natives have some crude idea of an Omnipotent Being, to whom they allude as the Great Spirit above, of whom they speak reverentially, and who is known by some of the tribes as 'Morema,' *i.e.*, the power in the skies."

Rustenburg was the point where our journey ended, and from which we turned our faces Bloemfonteinwards. A great part of the return journey was over old ground, and I must run over it very hurriedly for the sake of keeping this chapter within due proportions.

We left Rustenburg on Friday, in the afternoon, and trekked by moonlight. We outspanned a little way up a pass leading direct from Rustenburg

over the Magaliesberg. The altitude produced a sensible change in the temperature. Both Lawton and myself were compelled to don our thick ulsters; the poor boys, who were only thinly clad, were too benumbed to strike the matches for lighting the fire, and I had to get out and do it for them. There was plenty of wood about, however, and we soon had a rousing fire; and some warm coffee with a touch of brandy warmed them into animation. The cold set the Doctor coughing again, and he began to relapse into the old condition of prostration, from which he had partially recovered since leaving Pretoria. We crossed the nek next day and found it much easier than Selekatse's Nek. It is situated at a point where the mountains begin to lose their extreme elevation, before finally melting into the veld further west. From the top we took our last glimpse of the fertile and warm "Bosch veld," and turned our faces towards the less tempting, arid plains of the high country. After leaving the pass and crossing the valley at the foot, we mounted higher and higher, till at night we found ourselves on a bleak upland, with heavy clouds overhead, from which flickered perpetual flashes of lightning. During the night it rained at intervals, and to add to our disagreeables, we discovered that the waggon was swarming with insects which had somehow found their way into it at Rustenburg, and which did their best to prevent us sleeping. Next morning we passed the crest of the ridge at a height of 5,100 feet, and began to go down hill. There was no water at our outspan for us or the bullocks,

notwithstanding that everything was so wet that we had the greatest difficulty in keeping a fire going. We had a sort of supplementary breakfast at a farm, where we found a raffish looking Englishman installed as schoolmaster. The master of the house was very hospitable, and we were compelled to eat with him, though we had only breakfasted two hours before. This was the place I have described at length in Chapter IX.

After a trek across a bare ugly-looking upland veld, enlivened by numerous showers of rain, we reached next day one of the "eyes" of the Mooi River. The so-called eye was a spring, or a series of springs, in a depression from which bubbled a clear, beautifully limpid water. The depression was partially filled with reeds, in which were a number of wild duck, and which I spent two long hours trying to shoot. I threw stones, I whistled, I used violent language in the hope of forcing them out of the reeds; but they were wise ducks, and did not budge. At last I was obliged to retire to the waggon, and make my dinner off potted salmon, resolutely putting on one side the visions of roast duck, which had haunted my brain.

We travelled down the Mooi River, passing numerous farm houses on the way. The night after not shooting the ducks was a very miserable one, and the insect torments forced us out of bed long before sun up. As soon as the rain had fairly ceased, we had all the bedding out and exposed to the sun, and ultimately by dragging it out at every

outspan, we vanquished our minute foes, and forced them to seek pastures new.

We reached Potchefstroom after dark on Monday evening. Outside the town we met a number of waggons crowded with volunteers from the Diamond Fields, on their way to fight Sekkukuni. We found afterwards that there were over 150 of them. They had quite upset the normal staidness of Potchefstroom, and I rather fancy the Potchefstroomers were not altogether sorry to get rid of them, and to return to their usual condition of decent gravity.

Before we left Potchefstroom on our journey to Pretoria, Lawton received many solicitations to settle and practice at Potchefstroom. He promised to think the matter over, but I could see he liked the place; and his improving health encouraged him so much, that he had quite made up his mind before we had got to Rustenburg to remain at Potchefstroom. I was exceedingly sorry to part with him. Despite his illness, he had been an intelligent and agreeable companion, and I did not contemplate a solitary trek to Bloemfontein with satisfaction. It was not for me, however, to stand in his way, and it was accordingly arranged that I should leave him there, and see to getting his things packed and sent off to him on my arrival at Bloemfontein.

In pursuance of his intention, he removed his effects, and took up his quarters at the large hotel, where I presently followed him. I had registered a vow before leaving Bloemfontein not to sleep in a

house till my journey was ended, but the cold was so intense at night, that I gave way, and went to the hotel. We did not improve matters very much. The floors of the bedrooms were mud. The doors opened directly on to the backyard, and fitted so badly, that the cold wind found its way through innumerable crevices. There were no fires in the house, and in the morning we had to wrap ourselves up in our ulsters, and stand in the sun to get thawed. The cold and the wet of the last few days gave us both coughs, and the Doctor's became distressing. He was, however, so delighted at finding he had gained weight during the trek from Potchefstroom up-country, that he paid little heed to his advancing cough.

I found the ever perennial dispute between the eastern and western provinces of Cape Colony breaking out even in the Transvaal. A quasi-public dinner was given by some of the residents to a gentleman who was leaving the town. One of the toasts proposed after the dinner was "The Sister Colonies." A Capetown man responded, and in the course of his speech he alluded to the privilege of "sitting under" the beautiful shadow of Table Mountain. Instantly two or three indignant eastern men were on their feet protesting against Table Mountain being considered the only place in the colony for sitting under. A scene of confusion supervened, and it was a day or two before the bellicose elements had fairly subsided, and the Easterns and Westerns again met on terms of friendship.

Two great events occurred during my stay in the

town. The first was the Queen's birthday, which was celebrated with great *eclat*. The day was ushered in by the firing of a royal salute from two antiquated cannons, which everyone shirked firing. When they were at length discharged by the aid of a red-hot poker, the enthusiasm was immense. Everybody had a holiday, and a cricket match and ball completed the festivities in an orthodox manner. The Potchefstroom people were spurred to extra efforts, in consequence of the presence of a huge number of Boers, who had come to a special Nachtmaal, and who watched the proceedings of the loyalists with a faint interest, but without the slightest approach to any expression of disapproval. Nothing but a refractory bullock or native moves the solid equanimity of the Boers.

The Nachtmaal was attended by several hundreds of people, whose waggons were pitched in the Market Square round the church. The scene was very animated, particularly at sunset, when the different spans of oxen were driven in from the veld, and attached to the disselbooms of their respective waggons. I was very much interested in the proceedings of a tame Kaffir crane which established itself in the square, and which I caught fast asleep one day in the thickest part of the confusion. The bird was sitting on its long ancles with its eyes shut, and perfectly insensible to the noise round it. No one molested it, and it molested nobody. In the wild state the birds are very timorous, and it was pleasing to see the creature so confident of the protection of human beings.

But I must not digress. We lost one of our bullocks at Potchefstroom by red water—a disease which is as fatal among oxen as the horse sickness among horses. I was compelled to sell his yoke-fellow, because the South African system of inspanning only admits of dual numbers in a waggon. I had also to part with Rudolph, whom I should have liked to have taken on to Bloemfontein; but we had promised his master that he should go back. He remained with the waggon to the last, and said good-bye with evident regret. I engaged a boy in his place, called Hermanus, who spoke English. He was sullen, but did what was told him. He was, if possible, blacker even than Swartboy. I saw our old driver, Benjamin, whom we put in the tronk at Kroonstad, while we were at Potchefstroom. He looked volumes, but dared say none.

I left Potchefstroom after a stay of over a week. The Doctor and our good friends the C's, accompanied me in a pony phaeton as far as the Mooi River, where I had sent the waggon on, and told the boys to wait for me. When I got to the river, I found the sapient driver had outspanned on the other side. The little phaeton would have been covered completely with water if we had attempted to cross the river, and I shouted to Hermanus to bring the waggon back. He grinned from ear to ear on seeing my dilemma, which had never entered into his calculations. In South Africa one must be completely head as far as natives are concerned, and rest quite satisfied at their being only hands. When the waggon came over, I got in and started on my

solitary trek shouting my last farewells to the C's and to my old travelling chum, whom I thought I had seen the last of. But man proposes and God disposes.

I shall not weary the reader by going over old ground again. I found myself very lonely for want of a companion, but I had no mishap, except that of losing the oxen for two or three hours one morning. I reached Kroonstad by forced treks on the morning of the fourth day from Potchefstroom, and received a hearty welcome from my kind friends the B's. After leaving Kroonstad, I pushed on by the most direct route to Bloemfontein, leaving Winburg to the left. The only hill of importance I passed was "Kopjie Alleen," or the "Lone Hill," a solitary sugar-loaf hill which rises out of the vast plain. The veld was almost bare, all the grass being eaten down by the caterpillars. My poor oxen suffered dreadfully, and I was at length compelled to buy forage for them. I reached Vlakfontein on the tenth day from leaving Potchefstroom, but found Mr. B was in Bloemfontein. A gentleman friend of his was in possession, and I spent the night with him. Next morning I started late, and had to make a hard trek to get to Bloemfontein, which I did not reach till nine o'clock. A friend passed me on the way in a buggy and announced my coming, and on arriving, I found a meal had been prepared for me. I saw the lights more than an hour before I reached the town. It was one of the slowest hours I ever spent in my life, and I think Hermanus must have thought me very unrea-

sonable in urging him to be continually pushing on the tired and exhausted oxen. At length, after a weary interval, we reached the desired haven. The first voice I heard was that of my old friend R, and I was only too delighted to step out of the cold lonely waggon into the companionship of friends, and the enjoyment of a good hearty welcome.

## CHAPTER XII.

### BLOEMFONTEIN TO ENGLAND.

R's SHOOTING trip had come to an untimely end for want of game. He said the veld was almost bare, and he did not see anything like the number of springboks which we observed on our way to the Diamond Fields. The gathering increase of settlers is driving the game further into the interior. All the dangerous game has already vanished from the Free State, and the herds of buck are migrating as well. Not ten years ago they might be counted by thousands in the centre of the State. Mr. H told me he has seen them so thick together near his house, that he might have walked on their backs. The time is not far distant when the hunter will have to penetrate into the interior beyond the Zambesi, or seek his quarry in the malaria and tsetse-haunted flats round Delagoa Bay. Notwithstanding his lack of sport, R was determined to try his fortune a little longer in South Africa, and accordingly I prepared to go home alone.

The oxen were so done up by the forced journey of the last ten days, and the absence of proper nourishment, that they were not saleable. I was glad, therefore, to leave them to the care of Mr. H who undertook to fatten them up and sell them for me. I paid one more visit to his hospitable house before I quitted Bloemfontein. I also went over the

hospital, which had been newly opened in connection with the English Church in Bloemfontein. I was taken over it by the hardworking but non-belligerent vicar, who commanded the respect of those people even who objected to his views, on account of the good he has done to the town. The hospital is on the cottage plan. It is a model of cleanliness and comfort. A capital idea in connection with it is a series of rooms designed for the reception of consumptive people of the wealthier sort, who, for a payment of ten shillings a day, will have board, nursing, and medical attendance. I also went over the abode of the Anglican Sisterhood—I do not quite know whether it would be in rule to call it a convent—and was introduced to some of the lay sisters. They are not under vows of celibacy, as they generally testify by getting married soon after their arrival. They have a girls' school under their charge which bears an excellent reputation. There is a pretty brick chapel attached to the school, the gift of a lady in England. The altar was richly decorated in honour of the festival of Corpus Christi. The Bloemfontein clergy make no secret of their High Church tendencies, so that I commit no breach of confidence in disclosing the fact. The influence of Bishop Gray, of Capetown, has made itsel ffelt all over the country, and, except in Natal, the churches everywhere are more or less "High." Opposed, however, as I am personally to Ritualistic notions, I cannot help wishing God-speed to the excellent institutions in connection with the English Church at Bloemfontein.

While I was preparing for my departure to England, I was shocked one day by the head waiter at the hotel telling me that Dr. Lawton had come down from Potchefstroom completely broken down. I ran to his room, but he was asleep, worn out with the fatigue of the journey from Potchefstroom. Later on I went again to see him. He said his cold had got worse after I left, and at length resulted in inflammation of the lungs. He had been spitting blood, and felt so acutely his position in the midst of strangers, that he determined to come down to Bloemfontein, and to go with me to England. I knew it was no ordinary attack which had disheartened the plucky fellow. A medical examination confirmed my worst suspicions, and the doctor who examined him considered his a grave case. An invalid myself, I should have preferred not being burdened with this new care, but I felt it would be cruel not to yield to his request, and I agreed that he should accompany me.

We sent on our heavy goods by ox waggon, and took our own passages in Geering's coach, which runs between the Diamond Fields and the Port Elizabeth Railway. We started at five o'clock in the morning. It was bitterly cold and dark, but we had a number of kind friends to see us off. R had tried hard to persuade me to stop with him a bit longer, and blamed me severely for quitting the country when it was beginning to do me so much good. But engagements at home demanded my presence, and I was obliged to leave him. He was the last to grasp my hand and wish us a prosperous journey.

There were nine persons in the coach, being two more than it held comfortably. I was jammed between two stout passengers on a back seat, and I could hear, but not see, the Doctor coughing in the front. The coaches are not mounted on springs, but are slung on leathern straps running fore and aft; they are drawn sometimes by six and sometimes by eight horses. The drivers go at full speed, reckless of all impediments but those of the most serious character. It was some advantage being tightly squeezed in between two large persons, inasmuch as their bodies neutralised the fearful jolting.

We had an accident half an hour after starting. As we were mounting the bank of a small spruit, the traces broke, and the four front horses galloped off across the veld; the driver and conductor mounted the other horses and went after them. Fortunately in about an hour they came across the fugitives, and we were able to proceed. When the harness broke, the coach slipped back into the spruit, but there was no upset. We had breakfast at a farm, where the horses were changed. A halt was made every day for breakfast and tiffin, and we got dinner on our arrival at the hotel where we passed the night. Our resting place for the first night was at a Free State village, called Smithfield. We arrived at seven, the stipulated time, but the driver had to gallop the horses most of the way to do the journey in the time. The Totties, who drive the coaches, are magnificent whips and stick at nothing. The horses were changed on the aver-

age every two hours, and were driven like wildfire. But the jolts! It was no uncommon thing, after crossing a spruit, for us to find ourselves in a heap in the bottom of the vehicle. I was now much stronger than when I left Capetown, and I could almost have enjoyed the journey but for poor Lawton. He suffered terribly from the shaking. Before leaving Bloemfontein, he had provided himself with a supply of morphia, repeated doses of which kept him in a semi-comatose condition, and moderated his sufferings a little. Our fellow-travellers displayed every attention in their power to him, and they squeezed themselves in a most uncomfortable manner to provide room on the front seat for him and me. One of the nine passengers got out at Smithfield, and his absence made us a little less crowded.

There was great grumbling at the hotel at Smithfield. When we sat down to dinner, we discovered that there were only two miniature fowls amongst eight of us. Then we had to sleep four in a room, and one of the party had a valuable kaross stolen from him. But there was not much time for grumbling; we were off again at five. For the first three or four hours it was very cold, and the wheels of the coach crunched the ice in the puddles as we rattled along. We huddled together for warmth, and drew the skin curtains which formed the sides of the coach tight down, so as to exclude the biting air. Presently the sun rose, and as his warm beams gradually thawed our numbed bodies, we became more at ease. We crossed Caledon River shortly

before sun-up; I only knew we were at it by receiving a hurried warning to "hold tight," and by being projected violently against the top of the coach. There was no resting for us to collect ourselves when we got to the other side; the horses went off at a gallop directly we reached it, and we settled down as best we could.

We began now to see on our left hand the mountains of Basutoland rising sharp from the plain in conical peaks. We stopped for breakfast at a small forlorn-looking village—a near relative to Brandfort—called Rouxville. After leaving Rouxville, we drove across a very uncanny country, peppered all over with loose stones which made us quite experienced in the different kind of bumps. We were delighted when the driver stopped for a moment on the top of a hill to breathe his horses, and pointed to some specks in the distance, which he said were the houses of Aliwal North. Our delight arose, however, not so much at the prospect of once more treading British soil, as of getting some rest for our weary bones. The country between the stony hills and the river was seamed with sluits which ran at right angles to the great river, and which bore traces of furious floods that had rushed down them some time. We crossed the Orange River by a drift which led us direct into the town of Aliwal North. The stream was nearly as broad as the Thames at Westminster, but the water was only a couple of feet in height. Aliwal North was a pleasant looking town or village. The buildings were much neater than those in the Trans-

vaal or in any Free State town, except Bloemfontein. The streets were clean and tidily kept. They were intersected by furrows of water from a hot spring in the neighbourhood, which has a great local reputation for the cure of rheumatism. The town is situated at a height above sea level estimated at 4,500 feet, and has a fair character for dryness. The mean annual rainfall over eight years is 25 inches, extending over 95 rainy days. The hotel appeared to be a very decent one.

A little way beyond Aliwal North we passed the hot springs. There was no wind and much dust, which rose about us in blinding clouds. After leaving Aliwal, we ascended a steep hill, on the top of which we changed horses. We reached Jamestown, our stopping place for the night, at seven o'clock, very weary with our day's journey. The hotel was humble, but the fare consisted of more than two fowls, and it was served with better grace than the dinner at Smithfield. There was a large fire, of the fuel of the country, which thoroughly warmed our chilled frames. It was cold work throughout the journey, before the sun came up, and after it went down. In the morning especially, as we sat bumping about in the dark, I used to feel as if some lump of marble were rolling about rather than myself in *propriâ persona*. The poor Doctor must have suffered dreadfully. He sat helplessly on the cushions we had provided for him, alternately dozing and coughing.

The next morning was Sunday, but it was no rest day for us. We started again at five. We

crossed the Stormberg at a height, by my aneroid, of between 5,000 and 6,000 feet. Our breakfast outspan took place at Dordrecht, a little town at the foot of a precipitous hill. At Dordrecht we noticed the first signs of the Kaffir war, which was just simmering down. There was a large barrack, or fort, outside the town, constructed of turf, with bastions and loopholes. Some of the houses had also parapets round the roofs, and loopholes in the walls, now stuffed up with mud. Coal had been worked in the neighbourhood, and I found it in use at the hotel.

We took in a new passenger at Dordrecht. We were approaching the outskirts of the war country, and I had a talk about the war with him. He said that the crafty old Galeka chief, Sandili, was dead. He was a British subject, but after amusing the Government by promises of peace he turned against them. His son, Edmund Sandili, a civilised Kaffir, who had joined his father, was ill and on the point of giving himself up. Edmund Sandili's defection had been a feather in the cap of the anti-missionary party. He was educated with great care by a Bishop of Capetown, and was looked upon as a great triumph of civilisation. When his father broke out, Edmund flung aside his civilised costume, and took to the kaross and the bush. Whether his duty to his father or his duty to his educators should have been paramount, must be left to casuists to determine. I must confess that I could not look upon the act with the severe reprobation with which I heard it criticised in the colony.



NACHTMAAL AT POTCHEFSTROON.

He was afterwards tried, and sentenced to penal servitude as a rebel.

Our fellow passenger said he had driven from King William's Town to Dordrecht about a month before I met him. At one place he heard the sounds of firing, and his horse shied at something lying in the road. It was the body of a Kaffir just shot, and with the life blood weltering from a gaping wound in the chest. On all sides the troops and Kaffirs were firing at each other. I asked him what he did. "Oh, drove on and trust to luck." He said no business could be carried on if travellers took notice of the war!

Some time after leaving Dordrecht we drove down a steep hill, over a series of steps caused by horizontal strata of rocks cropping out in ledges across the face of the hill. The road wound down the steps, or "bankies" as they were called, in turns and zigzags which did not tend to improve the look of matters. I have seen many flights of stairs in Italian Palazzi, down which I could have driven with a better chance of not breaking my neck. Our Tottie coachman took the steps as a matter of course, and drove us down at a trot. The coaches are provided with powerful breaks, and they are required. One of the horses did stumble, but a touch of the whip sprung him up, and we got to the bottom without accident. It must be a fearful job to drive the coach in the other direction up the hill.

After getting quite clear of the bankies, we crossed a plain, bordered on the left hand by the mountains of Kaffirland, and dotted with huts of

Tambookies or Amatembu Kaffirs, who have a location in this part. I noticed no karosses among them, but nearly every man had a red blanket thrown round him. They were leaner and redder than the Zulus or Basutos, and the expression of their faces was not so frank or so agreeable. The Tambookies wavered a great deal in their allegiance during the war, and some, partly by reason of a little mismanagement in dealing with them, went over to the enemy.

The country, through which we afterwards passed, was composed of round hills covered with russet-coloured grass, but devoid of trees. We went up one hill and down another without much regard to gradients. At one place we crossed a nek, called Bongolo Nek, where the approach to the summit was as steep as a house-roof of average pitch. The road zigzagged up it in short, sharp windings, and as we looked down, we saw neither bush nor stone to break the fall if the coach slipped. We were all glad when the nek was passed, for we had had a new coach that morning, and on examining it at the last outspan, one of my companions found the pole hook, by which the front horses pulled, was half worn through. I am perfectly certain that the two pole horses and the break combined would not have been able to hold us back from slipping to the bottom of the ascent, if the hook had given way. When we reached the top, I found, by my aneroid, that it was just 500 feet above the plain.

There was a small waterfall on the opposite side,

and the country began to look less barren. We were now fairly in the "English" part of the colony, and passed several farm houses of a neat and attractive appearance. Dotted down among them, I observed one with all the old familiar Free State look about it, square, squat, with a flat roof, the holes left by the scaffold poles unfilled, no neat trim wall around it, but a general air of untidiness and slovenliness. I pointed it out to my companions and they told me it belonged to a Boer!

It was growing dark and cold as we reached Queenstown. Before we arrived at the town we had to pass through a narrow poort, through which ran a river that only just left room for the road beside it. When we emerged from the poort it was very dusk. By the time we reached Queenstown it was dark. By artificial light, Queenstown appeared to be a large town, with plenty of shops and all the appliances of civilised life. We left it next morning before sunrise, and as I am especially anxious to avoid quoting other people's descriptions, I must pass it over in silence. The hotel where we stayed (Long's), was a capital one, and I can recommend it with confidence. From all accounts Queenstown is an admirable place for breaking the long journey to Bloemfontein.

We breakfasted next morning at Whittlesea, a small village. Several of the houses had the windows boarded up, and were loopholed. After leaving the village, we drove full tilt across a stony rantzy country, which neither delighted the eye, nor afforded ease to the back. We jolted over stones

till we reached the foot of the Katberg, another of the mountain chains which run parallel to the sea, and which let the country down by degrees from the high plains of the interior to sea level. A road runs across the top of the mountain, and connects Queenstown with Grahamstown. Mr. Bain, the engineer of the Bain's Kloof Road, constructed the one over the Katberg. It is said he might have engineered an easier road by going a little to the right or left, but he made it over the mountain purposely to show the colonists what he could do. The lower part of the road follows a mountain stream, till it reaches a place at which there is a small hotel. It then strikes boldly up one of the buttresses at the mountain, and passes over the very top of a height of 5,200 feet (by my aneroid), above sea level.

The people at the hotel had only just taken down the barricades, which had surrounded the place for some months. There were a number of crenellated loopholes in the walls, and a few hours' work would have reconverted the house into a tolerable fort. The barricades had been removed in consequence of the presence of a large body of Fingoes in the neighbourhood, who had been sent there to hunt up the Kaffirs who were still lurking in the fastnesses of the mountains. We were guarded by an armed escort from this place till within a little distance from Grahamstown. The first escort consisted of two of the Fingoes mounted. They were clothed in a European dress as motley in its patches and colours as Joseph's coat of many colours. They rode on

sturdy ungroomed Kaffir ponies, and carried short Enfield rifles, the butt ends of which they rested on their knees.

The view from the top in the direction from which we came was rather dreary. There were few trees visible. The sides of the mountain consisted of long bare ridges with deep kloofs between, devoid of vegetation. Beyond lay rolling hills, covered with short dried grass of brown stubbly hue. The look-out across the country we had yet to travel over was more interesting. There were ridges and kloofs on that side as on the other, but the face of the mountain was much steeper and more broken. The kloofs were filled with dense bush. The hills beyond were also more or less covered with bush, only the summits being bare. Indeed the scene only wanted a little more vividness of tint, and a moister, greener look about it to be very beautiful.

The road ran in sharp zigzags down the sides of the mountain, and through the bush. Bones of oxen, whitening in the valley beneath, showed where accidents had occurred, and the Doctor pointed out a place where a waggon had fallen down the precipice, with all the oxen, and was smashed to pieces, just before he came over on his way up-country. The foliage on the road side was brilliant with flowers. The scarlet flower of the aloe was predominant. The black dense background of bush threw out into bold relief the lighter tints, which lined the opening made by the road; and the faint possibility that savage eyes might be watching us from the dark depths of the forest, added a dash of excitement to the scenery.

The forms of vegetation were entirely different to those at home. Euphorbias, aloes, cactuses, and other unfamiliar plants gave an air of strangeness to the landscape. I suppose it is the force of habit, but no vegetation seems to me so beautiful as the quiet, sober, green trees and hedges of England. Here there was every description of colour, but the very excess of colour jarred on the mental retina.

At an hotel at the foot of the pass our escort was changed to three men. The road still went downwards till we reached the Kat River. We were fairly in the thick of the bush, when we arrived by the side of the river. Nothing could be seen but dense foliage covering all the valleys, and the hills to their summits. The road and the river alone formed alleys through the thick mass. Millions of Kaffirs might have hid unseen. We we were now approaching a part of the country, where some of the hottest skirmishing took place. The country bore the marks of war. The farmhouses were burnt or dismantled by the owners. The road was almost deserted, and every person we met was armed to the teeth. We changed horses at a police-station *en route*, and our escort was increased to four. The Kaffirs we met looked scowlingly at us as we passed. One fellow had his face painted red, and was greeted with a howl of execration from our fellow passengers. The hostile Kaffirs were in the habit of decorating themselves in this manner, and John Bull could not help resenting the war paint, though it was probably the result of personal vanity on the part of some very innocent native. A second change of horses took

place at the Blinkwater, opposite the entrance to the Waterkloof, the scene of some bloody fighting. Just outside our stopping place for the night, Fort Beaufort, one of our escort came down, but both man and pony were up like cats in a moment. The upset took place close to where Tini Macomo, a Kaffir chief, had been captured a short time before.

Fort Beaufort appeared to be a snug little town, as far as I could judge by an evening glance at it. We found the Commercial Hotel, where we stayed, very fair. Indeed, the hotels in the Eastern Province appeared far better everywhere than those in the West. As a rule they were both clean and comfortable. It was much warmer at night now we had reached the lower side of the two great ranges of the Stoomberg and Katberg.

Next day we had an escort of six Fingoes. We drove through bush which covered the hills with a thick mantle, without a break. The road left the Kat River, and ascended a hill. On the crest of the hill were some watch towers, constructed in an earlier Kaffir war for signalling the presence of natives. At the summit, the bush thinned out a little. We were smothered with dust, and the driver left the road and drove across the veld to avoid it, and to cut off the windings of the road. It was brisk work for him to dodge in and out among the clumps with his horses going down hill at full speed. We had breakfast at a small inn. Shortly after leaving it, as we were going down a hill, I noticed the wheel scraping the side of the coach where I sat. I called the attention of my com-

panions to it, and we then discovered the wheel on the other side was getting further away. Presently, the passengers on the back seat found they were two inches nearer mother earth than when we started. The driver could not, or would not, check the horses as they went down the hill, and I sat watching the wheel all the way, and calculating the weight of the person who would fall on the top of me in case of an upset. At the bottom a council of war was held. There was no other vehicle to be had, and the result of the deliberation was that we must make the best of the one we had got. We drove slowly to the next police station. Just before reaching it, we had a little fright. Our escort had galloped ahead, for some reason, at a place where there was a great bend in the road. Suddenly, there appeared at the edge of the bush a Kaffir with a couple of assegais in his hands. As soon as he saw us, he turned round, and we saw him making his way across the bend through the bush. Our digger friends begun to talk about the adaptability of the place for an ambush, and we took stock of the weapons amongst us. On comparing notes, we found we had only one revolver in the whole party, and the ammunition for that was locked up in a portmanteau at the back of the coach. We should have been well able to have sustained a skirmish with Kaffirs! I think some of our party were relieved when we turned a corner of the road, and found the man was a friendly Kaffir sent out from a police station, to warn a new escort of the approach of the coach. At the station, our driver procured a

number of ox riems, and we proceeded, some to push and others to pull, while the driver tied the riems round and round the crazy vehicle. Thus equipped, we started again on our journey. Soon after we crossed the Koonap River by a veritable stone bridge, the first I had seen for some months. We were now in a new district, and our escort drew up and left us to face the bush alone.

We now drove by the side of the Fish River, which was the scene of many battles higher up its course. We were not quite free from hostile Kaffirs yet, for as we stopped to change horses at a farm-house, the proprietor told us they had killed three of his oxen only the night before, and he showed us the kloofs where they had taken refuge, and where the police were hunting them up. People had returned to their houses in this part of the country, but everybody wore arms.

The scenery had been charming throughout the day, and there was not one dull bit since leaving Fort Beaufort. The only drawback was the clouds of dust which enveloped the coach, and which interfered largely with the proper enjoyment of the broken bush country, with its kloofs, and vividly coloured flowers.

As we approached Grahamstown, the views increased in interest. We drove up the Queen's Road, which runs straight up a deep kloof at a tremendously steep angle, and which we hardly faced with equanimity, in our broken-down conveyance. After emerging from the kloof we took a last lingering look at the beautiful bush, made our last change of horses,

and then drove over bare flats into Grahamstown, where we halted at Wood's Hotel.

Our party broke up here, and as we took a parting glass with our travelling companions, we thanked them for the great consideration they had shown to us, and particularly to poor suffering Lawton.

We stayed a very little time at Grahamstown. It has been often described, and I must not linger over it. It is a clean well-watered town, in a deep depression, with good houses, and a clock-tower, which it is essential to be pleased with. It has the reputation of being one of the pleasantest places of residence in the colony next after the environs of Capetown. It is inhabited almost entirely by English people, and has not even a Dutch church in it. It aspires to be the capital of the East, and, in common with Port Elizabeth, has no dealings with Capetown. It—and in fact most of the Eastern Provinces—was settled by a colony of emigrants who came over from England in 1820, and to whom the colony owes most of its progress and its amenities.

We reached Port Elizabeth from Grahamstown, partly by the mail coach, and partly by rail. The railway ought to have been open all the way, but the war had hindered it, and there was very little progress being made with it, as we drove alongside the works. The drive was across cold bleak uplands. A keen biting wind blew with great force, causing us to huddle up inside our ulster coats. The road was a vile one, and shook us up terribly. It was with a sigh of relief that the Doctor sunk down on the soft cushions of a first-class carriage at Alicedale,

the terminus of the line. After our jolting and pitching during the last few days the motion of the train might be described, in the language of Sairey Gamp, as "'evingly." The railway passes through the Addo bush, where elephants are to be found. The scenery, though not equal to what we had been through, was very pretty, till within four or five miles of Port Elizabeth. The bush then dwindled off, and the rest of the ride was over uncomely-looking flats.

Port Elizabeth is very clean—much cleaner, indeed, than Capetown. It is situated in an open bay, on the side of a cliff, and is subject to furious winds. It has one of the worst climates in South Africa, and is a place to be carefully avoided by invalids. It speaks volumes for the enterprise of the inhabitants that they have been able to make such a place, and do such a trade, in such an exposed situation. Several attempts have been made to form a harbour, but all in vain. The sea still laughs at the attempts of man, and the ribs of ships rotting round the shores of Algoa Bay attest its power. All goods have to be loaded and unloaded, first into surf-boats, and then from them on to the shoulders of stalwart Kaffirs. Getting into the steamer was a work of difficulty. We had to go out in a surf-boat, and to be hauled up the ladder by sailors at a favourable moment. Lawton was quite broken down when we got on the steamer, and I was very thankful to put him in the hands of the kind and attentive doctor of the ship.

We sailed in the "Taymouth Castle," one of

Messrs. Donald Currie & Co.'s steamers. She was smaller and slower than the "American," but better fitted up. We took thirty-four children on board at Port Elizabeth, who had come from the Mauritius, *viâ* Natal. Their presence made the ship lively—indeed sometimes too lively.

We stayed at Capetown a short time, and I visited my old friends there. S, much to my regret, was at Vlak Kraal, and I failed to see him.

The Doctor was a little better at Capetown, and after leaving it, I hoped the voyage would do him good, and that he would be able to rejoin his friends in England. Unfortunately my hopes were fated not to be realised. As we neared the tropics his health began to give way. Every attention possible was shown him by the captain, and the doctor of the ship was most unremitting in his attention, even giving up his own cabin for his use. But all human help was in vain. He gradually sank, and two days after we crossed the line, he died.

* * * * * * *

His death quite upset me for a time, and prevented me from deriving the full benefit of the voyage. As soon, however, as I had recovered my spirits, I reported myself to my doctor. He told me I was much improved by the trip, and was pleased with the progress I had made.

During the early part of my stay in South Africa the discomforts and privations, and the sense of absence from home, made me, in my enfeebled con-

dition, feel at times very miserable. Afterwards I became accustomed to the new modes of life, and returning health elevated my spirits. When I left the country, I was able to look back to my sojourn in it with cheerful recollections; and, but for the one melancholy incident which tinged it with sadness, I have every reason to be satisfied with my trip to South Africa in search of health.

# CHAPTER XIII.

## INVALIDS' AND EMIGRANTS' CHAPTER.*

BEFORE bringing my book to a close, I propose saying some words on South Africa as a place for the arrest and cure of pulmonary diseases, and I will also add a few general observations for the benefit of emigrants. I have ventured in the course of the narrative to offer some remarks from time to time bearing upon the sanatory capabilities of the country, but I have reserved the bulk of my observations for this chapter, so as not to bore the general reader. Any person who is happy in the enjoyment of health, and not interested in valetudinarian talk, or who has no occasion to think about leaving his native country, may skip this chapter if he pleases.

* The invalid's part of this chapter has been kindly perused for the author by Dr. C. T. Williams, F.R.C.P., Physican to the Brompton Hospital for Diseases of the Chest.

The medical portion has been chiefly drawn from Dr. Williams' treatise on "The Influence of Climate in the Prevention and Treatment of Pulmonary Consumption," and from supplementary papers in the "Lancet" and "British Medical Journal." The author has also referred to a little *brochure* by Dr. Ross, entitled, "Consumption, its Treatment by Climate, with reference especially to the Health Resorts of the South African Colonies;" to Dr. Madden's "Health Resorts of Europe and Africa;" to various works on Peru, Mexico, and Colorado; and to German works on Davos and the climates of the Alps.

The topographical and meteorological information is supplied from the author's own observations, from newspaper cuttings, and from a variety of sources, including the article on the Cape in the "Encyclopædia Britannica;" the work of Theal on South Africa; of Noble on the Cape Colony; Silver's "Guide Book to South Africa"; and the Government Colonisation Circular.

South Africa has only recently become known as a resort for persons with delicate lungs. In the days when the journey from India was performed round the Cape it was a favourite sanitarium for officers and members of the Civil Service from India. With the extension of the overland route the reputation of the Cape ceased, and it is only of late, since dryness and atmospheric rarefaction have been recognised as important elements in the treatment of consumption that it has come again to the fore.

The modern treatment of consumption and allied diseases is largely climatic. The climatic mode of dealing with these complaints comprises several factors. Such are, for instance, dryness, altitude, cold or warmth, and sunshine. I propose to say a few words on each of these in turn. I do so with all the diffidence of a layman who approaches a subject in which he has received no special education save that of his own necessities.

And now, first, as regards dryness. Twenty years ago patients were sent to sedative, moist climates, as Madeira or Pau. In the first chapter I have given some statistics relative to a trial of Madeira by the Brompton Hospital authorities. I think it proves that moist climates are unfitted for the majority of consumptive patients. The preference for humid climates, however equable, has, in recent times, given way to opposite views. Patients are now ordered to places possessing a dry climate, such as Egypt, Malaga, or the South Coast of France. A dry, warm atmosphere stimulates the action of the heart and lungs, especially quickening the circulation in the

vessels of the skin, and increasing its secretion and that of the liver, and consequently lessening the elimination from the kidneys.* A table given by Dr. Theodore Williams, in his "Influence of Climate," of the results in over two hundred and fifty cases of lung disease sent abroad shows conclusively the advantages of dry climates for consumptives over moist ones, however desirable the latter may be in other respects. The best results from land climates in the tables come from Egypt, which is notoriously a dry country. I say *land* climates, because the most encouraging results in the tables occur in cases treated by long sea voyages. The latter mode of treatment is of undoubted efficacy in certain cases, but these are of a limited nature. It is impossible to go into the circumstances of the cases, which the curious reader will find discussed at length in the book quoted. The tables do not embrace many cases treated by altitude, and Dr. Williams would probably admit that notwithstanding the success of long voyages, in some instances a residence in a dry and high country offers the fairest chance of arrest of the disease for the large proportion of consumptive patients able to bear such treatment.

This leads me to consider the question of altitude. If dry climates have been a discovery of the last twenty years, high climates may be said to be a completely modern one. Dr. Archibald Smith was the first English physician to call attention to this factor in the climatic treatment of consumption. He

* Madden's "Health Resorts of Europe and Asia." Chap. I.

pointed out the beneficial effects on consumptive patients of a residence at a high level in the Andes of Peru. Other doctors called attention to similar effects caused by the mountain climates of the Himalayas in Asia, the Blue Mountains in Jamaica, Colorado in America, and the Alps in Europe. The researches of the earlier advocates of the theory have since been confirmed by numberless cases, and it is pretty well settled that in a large proportion of instances of lung mischief a residence at a height above sea level has a distinctly beneficial effect.

The concurrence of opinion only exists as regards the fact. There is the greatest possible divergence as to the reasons for it. Some doctors think that a mountain climate arrests phthisis simply because the air in elevated regions being rarer than the air at sea level holds less moisture in suspension, and is consequently drier. Others contend that the beneficial effects of mountain air are due to its purity. Professor Parkes says* :—"It is not indeed elevation and rarefaction of air, but simply plenty of fresh air and exercise which are the great agents in the cure of phthisis." At a recent meeting of the British Medical Association, Dr. Allbut considered the stimulating influence of the mountain air to be due solely to its antiseptic qualities. Other persons attribute the immunity from consumption, which the residents of high regions enjoy, to cold ; and in support of this view they instance the cold regions of Greenland and Canada ; in the former of which phthisis was erroneously supposed not to exist and in the latter

* "Practical Hygiene."

of which it is acknowledged to be rare. In Canada, however, pneumonia is common and often fatal; and it may be that it kills all the weak-chested persons in whom phthisis is latent. Dr. Lawton told me that he knew one or two persons who tried Canada for consumption, and who died of inflammation of the lungs soon after their arrival. Whatever the reason, I feel as convinced as a non-professional can be, both from my observations on others in the Alps and South Africa and from my own case, that mountain air has a distinct and direct influence either for good or evil. The rarefied air produces increased action of the heart, and an alteration in the shape of the chest. Patients breathe quicker and deeper; the least exercise brings about a necessity for an increase of air, inspired and expired, which forces a larger amount of lung surface into play. The doctors at Davos are thorough believers in the specific properties of the air. When a patient first arrives there he is prohibited from taking any active exercise. In a little time the lung expands to meet the altered conditions of the rarefied atmosphere. Exercise is then prescribed. A gentle walk is followed by a climb up hill for a short distance. The climb is lengthened gradually. The lung bears more work, and through working becomes developed to the full. Many people have injured themselves severely by taking exercise before the lung had habituated itself to the thin air. A gentleman from Colorado tells me that the cures there were much more pronounced before the railways were opened. Formerly a patient went up slowly by bullock

waggon, ascending higher every day by gentle gradients, and taking a month to do the journey. Now he accomplishes it in a day. As soon as he arrives and feels the invigorating effect of the mountain air, he rushes about and takes exercise without giving the lungs time to expand. Some injury to the lung occurs, and serious consequences follow. The Germans have a specific name for the gradual growth in power of a diseased lung under the effects of mountain air. They call it "lungen-gymnastik," and treatises are to be had at Davos under that title.

Dr. Williams speaking of the influence of mountain climate on phthisis, says* :—

"The influence may be described in its general aspect as intensely stimulating. The appetite is increased, the digestion and assimilation are improved, the respiration is quickened, and also the circulation. The last is a very decided feature. . . Brehmer, one of the originators of mountain-air treatment of phthisis, bases it entirely on the effect of the heart in phthisis being small, and the stimulating influence of the mountains tending to its further development and thus to increased circulation. The effect on the lungs appears to be chiefly the result of the inspiration of rarefied air, combined with the exercise taken."

Professor Parkes says† mountain climates produce a "very marked improvement in digestion, sanguification, and in nervous and muscular vigour."

* The "Lancet," Aug. 16th, 1879. † "Practical Hygiene."

I have noticed the altitude theory at some length on account of the prominence it has assumed of late, and because I owe a great deal to it in my own person. I now pass on to another factor in the cure of phthisis, viz., warmth.

I touch on this branch of the subject with increased diffidence, inasmuch as there is considerable difference of opinion in the medical profession whether a warm or cold climate is best, given other factors in common. In my own case, cold is distinctly contra-indicated. My visit to Davos in the warm summer of 1877, before I went to the Cape, did me a great deal of good. But a second visit, after my return, for the three months of January, February and March, 1879, and during the intense cold and snow of a Davos winter, did me harm, and I returned from the Alps with additional mischief in the lung. I saw other cases whilst I was there evidently injured by the cold. On the other hand, I am bound to say that some wonderful cases of arrest occurred. One in particular, of a friend of mine, a young man who was a little touched, but not sufficiently to prevent his taking active exercise, was most remarkable. On the whole, I cannot help thinking that, at all events in cases where there is any catarrhal tendency, the presence of warmth must be better, and more soothing to the susceptible mucous membrane than that of cold.

Another, but not so important an element in the climatic treatment of consumption, is sunshine. It was curious to see how the spirits of the patients at Davos went up and down with the sunshine—the

one was, as it were, a barometer of the other. At Davos sunshine is uncertain, but at the Cape it is so enduring that in a short time the visitor fails to notice it, and takes it as a matter of course. Intense sunshine brings increase of light; and as light quickens the growth of plants, and promotes the various chemical and vital processes which constitute inflorescence and fructification, so in the human being it stimulates development of all the tissues, and specially aids the production of colouring matter in the hair, skin, and most notably of the blood, thus leading to increased vigour of the system.

As regards the item of dryness, the Cape stands pre-eminent among climates. At Bloemfontein, on one occasion during January, 1878, the difference between the wet and dry bulb was 29 degrees—an evidence of enormous dryness. The reader will also remember the difference of 21 degrees on the Karroo. I have inserted in an Appendix a number of meteorological tables which prove the great absence of moisture in the climate. The fact is attested by other evidences. During the winter, the dry season, the nails crack, the hair loses its moisture, and becomes difficult to brush, and meat hung out in the open air is readily dried up and converted into "biltong," in which condition it will keep for months. The climate of Davos was at times very dry, though never so dry on the average as South Africa, and one dry day would be succeeded by two damp ones. It is only fair to say that last winter was a bad one, and that during the rains the South African climate is also subject to very sudden changes. But the horse

waggon journey from Capetown to Bloemfontein in the Cape summer, with only one shower during the whole journey, and the two months' trip to the Transvaal and back, with only about a week's wet, are great facts. During the winter, the visitor may reckon on months of fine weather, but during the summer he must be prepared for occasional rains. They come much less frequently than at home, but when they do come it is in deluges.

The nature of the soil of South Africa undoubtedly contributes largely to the dryness, combined with the quick slope of the upper part of the country. Rain never lies long on the ground. Part evaporates into the greedy air, and the rest runs off down the river beds in torrents. I have spoken about the quick drainage of the rivers in the previous chapters.

A dry subsoil is a great desideratum in fixing a residence for consumptive patients. Since England has been better drained, consumption has decreased to some extent. In the case of Ely, a distinct decrease was noticed after drainage. Doctors always recommend lung patients to live, where possible, on a dry, porous soil. This element is very marked in South Africa, and is indicated both by the appearance of the subsoil and the general absence of ground mists. Real downright fog appears to be unknown up-country. It will be observed, on reference to the tables in the Appendix, how the dryness of the country increases with the elevation. This is partly due to the elevation itself, because, *ceteris paribus*, there can be no doubt the rare

mountain climates are dryer than the denser ones of the lowlands. It is also due to the distance of the uplands from the sea, the dry tracts over which the winds have to pass, and the neighbourhood of the Kalihari Desert.

The tables indicate the degrees of warmth and cold. During the South African summer, the middle of the day is very hot, probably too hot for many persons. The nights are always cool, except when a hot wind blows, and then night and day are alike roasting. But these hot winds are not prevalent in the parts I recommend the tourist to visit. In summer and autumn the air is perfection, bracing, yet warm, devoid of moisture, and generally equable. In winter, the weather is pleasant while the sun is up, but the nights are disagreeably cold, and the houses are often unfitted for the proper endurance of the cold by a delicate person.

Other drawbacks of the country are to be found in the flies, the worst plague of all, the storms of wind, with their attendant clouds of dust, and the thin dust which is stirred up by the vehicle of the traveller on non-windy days. I have sufficiently insisted on these in the course of my story. I pass on, therefore, to take a rapid glance at some of the localities most favourable for fighting the fell disease —consumption.

In order to settle upon the best places, we must endeavour to secure both dryness and altitude. We must also know that local circumstances are favourable; that there is good accommodation for patients; and that the place is reasonably accessible.

At present, Bloemfontein combines these conditions—except, perhaps, the last—in the most satisfactory manner, and I therefore place it first. But I do not think Bloemfontein is superior in point of climate only to many other places in the highlands; and, as the country advances, other desirable localities, easier of access, will occur under British rule.

There is no other place in the Free State that I can recommend besides Bloemfontein. The other towns are mere villages, with indifferent accommodation and little English society.

For a person living in a farmhouse almost all parts of the Free States are alike; and he may expect to derive benefit anywhere, provided that the local circumstances are not unfavourable to health.

In the Transvaal, more discrimination is necessary. The "Hooge Veld" is the only locality where a lung patient ought to settle. Fortunately it occupies a wide district, and leaves a large choice. On the borders of Zulu and Swaziland, it attains a height of over 6,000 feet. The Lydenburg gold-fields are situated in this part of the country. Mr. Ayres, who had visited the "veld" on a natural history expedition, told me the climate was delicious, bracing, yet warm, and the air light and exhilarating. I visited the High Veld of the southern part of the Transvaal in late autumn. It was cold at night, sometimes bitterly so, but the days were very pleasant, and the air felt light and buoyant. The Transvaal has the additional advantage of being

under British rule, and it offers greater scope for enterprise than the Free State.

Of the two towns suitable for a visit by a consumptive patient, viz., Potchefstroom and Pretoria, I am afraid I must give the latter the preference. Potchefstroom is a far prettier place, and, indeed, I consider it the most charming town I saw up-country. But I do not like the swamp at the side of it, nor the fact that the subsoil is permeated by water. Unfortunately, I could not get any observations of temperature or climate there. Some of the residents told me that people with bad lungs improved by a residence in Potchefstroom; but until further information is at hand as to its meteorological conditions, it is better to be careful in recommending it. It is rather more difficult to reach than Pretoria, which has a regular service of coaches with Maritzburg in Natal. Potchefstroom can be got at from Bloemfontein by post-cart, but I most decidedly advise no invalid to try that mode of conveyance. At present, the easiest plan is to go to Kimberley by the Grahamstown coach, and from there by the Pretoria coach, which calls at Potchefstroom.

I have said enough about Pretoria previously, and need not repeat the information. The reader will find some meteorological tables in the Appendix, which will show him how Pretoria compares with other towns in South Africa in point of temperature and climate. Dr. Lawton inspected the instruments with which the observations were taken, and pronounced them good ones. The observer, Mr. Lys,

took his observations very carefully, and they may be relied upon.

Pretoria is reached by Cobb's coaches from Maritzburg in Natal, and also from Kimberley. In the course of time there will probably be a railway to it from Delagoa Bay. It will then run very hard with Bloemfontein as a place of resort for invalids; and if better sanitary arrangements are made, and more decent accommodation is provided, it is very likely to supersede the Free State capital.

The Kalihari Desert lies to the west of the Transvaal. Dr. Livingstone speaks in high terms of it as a residence for consumptives; but I am afraid a man would have to be reduced to a very misanthropic condition before living there by choice. If any patient does not object to black society he will find plenty of it at either Kolobeng or Shoshong.

Coming down along the western side of the Transvaal we arrive at Griqualand West, with Kimberley as its capital. I presume the reader will have judged from my description that it is not suitable for invalids. The position is good, but the benefits of it are entirely neutralised by the dust, the bustle, the natives, the unsanitary condition of the place, and the thousand and one circumstances incident to a great mining centre. Young men with weak lungs are often tempted up to it by the offer of situations at liberal salaries. But as a candid observer, my advice to any young man meditating such a step must be—Don't!

Turning now to Cape Colony, a number of places

suggest themselves: Colesberg, Aliwal North, Richmond, Dordrecht to the north of the Nieuweld range, and Queenstown, Cradock and Beaufort to the south of the mountains, occupy the loftiest situations. Colesberg has an ancient reputation for the cure of chest complaints; but it is a dull place and not easily reached by a public conveyance. Aliwal North is a very pretty town on a coach route, and stands fairly in the meteorological tables. The leading hotel is a good one and well situated. Richmond took my fancy as a place for invalids, and the reader will remember I devoted some space to it. When the railway to Graaf Reinet is completed, it will be easily accessible in one or two days from the terminus. It is the highest place in the colony. Dordrecht is a small town, which suffers from thunderstorms. Cradock, not far from it, but lower down than the towns mentioned, has been resorted to a little by lung invalids. It is also to be the terminus of a railway. A fellow passenger, who spent some time there, described it as horribly dusty and very hot. The country between it and Colesberg has long had a colonial reputation for the cure of chest complaints.

While in this neighbourhood I ought, perhaps, to mention Graaf Reinet, the garden of the colony, as the burghers call it. It is a pretty and comfortable town, but hemmed in by hills, and unbearably hot in the summer, and therefore not to be recommended.

Among the midland towns Beaufort West will be the first place of any great value for chest diseases, which will be made easily accessible. The railway

across the Karroo is already complete to within a short distance of Beaufort. Perhaps by the time these lines reach the reader it may be completed. Nothing will then be easier than to take the rail from Capetown. The rainfall, as will have been seen, is remarkably low, and if Dr. Drew should be able to carry into effect his idea of a sanitarium among the mountains in the neighbourhood of Beaufort at a height of 2,000 feet above the town, and 5,000 feet above sea level, a residence will be afforded to patients equal in altitude to, and with as much, or greater, dryness than Bloemfontein, and with the additional advantages of being only a few hours from a railway station, and under the British flag.

Among the towns in the colony not situated absolutely on the sea-coast, but at the same time without the benefit of any great altitude, I should be inclined to place Worcester in the first rank. Full information about it will be found in the second chapter, and meteorological statistics with reference to it are set out in the Appendix. It stands well in the list for dryness, and it is within a few hours of Capetown by rail, and has very fair accommodation. It is consequently a capital place for invalids coming to the Cape for the sea voyage and only making a stay of a month or two in the colony. The chief drawback is that it is very hot in summer. Malmesbury, an inland watering place, is also to be reached by rail from Capetown, but I know nothing about it.

In the Eastern Province, Grahamstown claims attention. It is not a dry place compared by Cape

standards, but it is a very pleasant town, and stands next only to the suburbs of Capetown as a desirable place for an idle man to live in. It is more than 1,700 feet above sea level, and is situated at a distance of twenty-five miles in a direct line from the sea. It catches the sea breeze daily, and has a more equable and humid climate for that reason. It has its full share of all the amenities of life, but notwithstanding, I would advise every consumptive person, who has time and strength enough to push higher up the country, to do so.

I now turn to Natal. I have no personal information about it, and the gist of my remarks, and the meteorological tables in the Appendix bearing on the country are mainly derived from the exhaustive and indispensable book of Brooks and Mann on Natal.

Natal is a country in which the terrace formation, of which I have before spoken, is characteristically developed. These terraces are roughly divided into the middle and upper country, the latter infringing on the Drakensberg, and the former occupying a position intermediate between the uplands and the low country near the sea, which forms a third region. Maritzburg, the capital, is situated in the middle country. It is 2,095 feet above sea level, but away from the influence of the sea breezes. The rain fall is large, being more than 70 inches on the average, but a large percentage of this falls in the summer months, and is principally derived from thunderstorms. The humidity is high for South Africa, and the greatest amount of it occurs at the period when it will be most likely to be visited by

English patients, that is during our winter and the Natal summer. The town is described as a well-built, commodious place, and it is clean and fairly supplied with water. A graphic description of life at Maritzburg from a lady's point of view will be found in Lady Barker's "Years' Housekeeping in South Africa."

A railway is being constructed from Maritzburg to Durban, the seaport of Natal. It is completed as far as Pinetown, which has been used as a hospital by the British troops during the late war. Pinetown lies at the summit of the first ridge of the middle country, at a height of 3,000 feet above sea level. It has a decent hotel, and abounds in fruit. A fellow passenger in the "Taymouth Castle" spent some time there. He had bad lungs, and did fairly well at Pinetown; but he said that the greatest benefit was derived from a waggon trip in the up country, and over the Drakensberg.

There are other places in Natal, such as Ladismith on the road to Bloemfontein, and Greytown, and Newcastle, near the Zulu border, which, from their elevation, appear to be well situated for a residence by weak persons. Durban is distinctly not a place for people with weak lungs. It may be stated, as a general rule, that no place upon the sea in South Africa is adapted for lung invalids. The sea air is loaded with humid particles, which render the atmosphere moist, and cause cold breezes. These cold, moist winds, though pleasant, are not beneficial, and the further a man with delicate lungs gets away from the sea, the more likely he is to meet

with a place that will suit him. Durban has not only the disadvantage of being a seaport, but is too hot in the summer, and it is liable to the "dengue," a fever of a typhoid type.

Of the other seaports in South Africa, I decidedly prefer Capetown. Port Elizabeth is the worst place in the country for people with weak chests. Capetown itself is too subject to south-easters and occasional mists to be safe; but a residence at Rondebosch or Wynberg would not be a bad exchange from a damp, cold English winter for those invalids who desire to take advantage of the easy and pleasant voyage to the Cape, without the discomforts attending land travel in the country. A better place than either Wynberg on Rondebosch would be on the slopes of Table Mountain. A short time ago I saw the prospectus of a sanitarium, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Constantia. If the scheme comes to anything, it should be worth the attention of invalids. But as I have said before, and I can hardly reiterate it sufficiently, the "up" country is the proper locality for those who can stand the journey thither.

In running over the names of the towns best suited to the patient, I have contemplated a residence in some stated locality, The majority of people who go out to the Cape will probably desire to live in some one spot during their stay. A dislike for rough living, or for unnecessary locomotion, or a real or imagined want of the necessary powers, will lead most invalids to prefer a stationary to a nomadic life.

My own experience leads me to consider the latter

the best type of existence for a man not absolutely unable to knock about. I derived more benefit during my two months' waggon journey than during the whole of the other nine months I was away from England. Mine is not by any means a solitary example. I heard of several who dated the first leap towards improvement from a waggon journey. Even Dr. Lawton, bad as he was, put on a little flesh during our trip. A man travelling in a waggon is up early. He constantly breathes fresh air. He sits in it, eats in it, and he sleeps in it. He is compelled to undergo a great deal of passive exercise as the waggon rolls along; and, if he chooses, he can ride or walk by its side. On the other hand, the dweller in walls is often disinclined to make due use of the fresh, pure air for which he has visited the country. Laziness, disinclination, the inertness which is the twin brother of ill-health, a habit of being indoors, love of books, one or all combine to keep him in a close, stuffy room, when he should be out in the open air filling his lungs with the medicine Nature offers to them. I would advise every young man particularly, who has sufficient stamina to endure the worry and fatigues of a waggon journey, and sufficient money to afford the cost of it, to undertake a trip in an ox waggon on the High Veld, or along the borders of the desert. If he has a taste for sport or natural history, so much the better. He will have plenty of opportunities of gratifying his tastes; and if I am not mistaken, he will return a healthier and better man for his communion with Nature's "sweet neglect."

An ox waggon is preferable to a horse waggon, for several reasons. To a man travelling for health, it does not matter whether he covers twenty or forty miles in the day. Oxen are hardier than horses, and are subject to fewer diseases. They feed themselves, while horses have to be fed at great cost. They cost less, and they realise their price all over the country. Besides, an ox waggon is roomier, and better adapted for a long trip than a horse waggon. My ox waggon trip cost me one-fourth of my horse waggon journey, though the latter only occupied one half the time of the other.

Either Grahamstown or Maritzburg should be the starting-point. Capetown, for reasons I have already alluded to, is decidedly unsuitable. There are waggon builders at both Grahamstown and Maritzburg, who will fit up a waggon in any way that may be desired. The cost of a waggon, without fittings, will probably be about a hundred pounds; but the fittings mount up very rapidly. The oxen will cost from six to eight pounds apiece; and if a full-sized waggon is taken, sixteen or eighteen oxen will be required. Caution will have to be exercised in getting the waggon made of properly seasoned wood, and in procuring a span of oxen properly trained to pull. These matters are best left to a colonial friend to whom the purchaser has an introduction, rather than to any one fresh from the old country, or, worst of all, to a casual acquaintance with a long tongue, picked up at a public-house.

Stores will be required for the journey; but unless the traveller is going beyond the reach of inhabited

places, it is not necessary to encumber the waggon with ordinary articles of consumption, such as flour, rice, sugar, or coffee. These are better procured, from time to time, in small quantities, as every inch of room will be required for other purposes. For sleeping, the usual plan is to have a cartel, but it fills up the waggon, and, being used both day and night, soon becomes dirty. I prefer let-down bedsteads, or portable ones made to pack up and stow away. The waggon tent should have apertures in it, protected by klaps, and every available niche inside should be occupied by a canvass pocket. The sides of the waggon should be provided with flaps of canvass, made to roll up during the trip, and to let down so as to form a tent at the outspan. An Etna must be forgotten on no account, and some camp stools and a portable table will add to the comfort of the party. The knives, forks, dishes, and pans must be of the simplest and plainest description. Portable cuisines may do very well at home, but, under the hands of a black boy, they soon become confusion worse confounded. A number of other articles, such as a hatchet, a spade for digging the waggon out of the mud, a spare wheel, or a spare disselboom, will be best suggested by some experienced friend on the spot, or by the waggon builder. Builders of established reputation only should be consulted. The waggons of some of the Grahamstown builders will fetch fifty per cent. increase on their value in the up-country towns.

The two most essential things to the comfort of

a journey are good boys and good travelling companions. Both boys and friends have it in their power to make the trip a success or a failure. I should recommend three boys at least to be taken, one to drive, one to foreloop, and the third, who should speak English, to cook and look after the interior of the waggon. We had only two, and I had consequently, with the assistance of the Doctor, when he was well enough, to look after the cooking, the washing, and a multiplicity of details which left no time for the indulgence of my hobbies. Often I have had to throw a bird away, because there was no time to skin it, or to miss a beautiful view because there was no opportunity of photographing it. I would also advise not too great a nicety about pay ; a good boy in South Africa is worth all he gets.

As regards friends, a traveller must be left to his own resources. My own opinion is that three are a good number to travel together. Two are apt to quarrel. The Doctor and I got on so well together because of his happy disposition, and because we both knew how to give and take a joke. But it is a dangerous experiment for two men to have to live together for months without some buffer between them. One of the party, whatever the number, should always be " baas," and through him the orders for the day should be given to the boys.

Firmness is necessary in dealing with native servants. They must be made to understand at the beginning that orders have to be obeyed. They acquiesce readily in commands if properly dealt with,

and even in punishments, which they know to be just. For instance, if sugar is served out for two days, and the boy, as he is likely to do, eats it all in one day, he must not be supplied with more until the two days have expired, at the peril of the master being considered a weak man and fooled accordingly. But firmness must be tempered with kindness. Sour looks and martinet discipline do not suit the jovial sons of Ham; and the judicious boss will know when to deal out a little extra coffee or brandy, or to buy a few sugar canes for his sweet-toothed followers. A little present now and then does no harm. The only precaution is not to let the boys have any money, or they will infallibly get drunk. It will be remembered that even "the best boy" in Pretoria was unable to withstand the fascinations of Cape smoke.

The next best thing to a waggon journey for an invalid is a residence at a farm house; and last of all I should place living at an hotel. To a person intending to reside at a farm house I would say, "Be up with the sun. Go to the kraal when the cows are being milked. Drink as much warm milk as you can. Sit out all day. Do your feeding and working in the open air as much as possible. Accompany the farmer in his drives, and also in his rides, if you can ride. Remember that for the cure of lung disease it is necessary to take full advantage of the fresh pure air."

The same remarks apply to persons staying at an hotel. "Do not haunt stuffy billiard rooms or sit up playing cards late at night. Compel yourself to

get out. If you cannot take exercise of an active nature, be driven out, or sit about on the hotel stoep. Above all, do not learn the South African habit of 'totting' between meals, and avoid the villainous Cape smoke and 'French,' as the Colonists call cognac."

To all, whether travelling or resident, I would add two words of caution which I should like to print in large capitals in order that it might attract attention. The first caution is not under *any* circumstances to drink water unless it has been boiled or filtered. The water at the Cape is impregnated with saline particles, and sometimes with organic matter. Numberless evils will be avoided by bearing this caution in mind. The second point is to remember the danger incurred by active exercise before the lungs have fitted themselves to the rarefied air of the highlands, and the necessity of being very quiet on first arriving in the up-country, so as to avoid any fresh irritation, and to permit the lungs to accommodate themselves gradually to the new circumstances.

I must say a few words, but they shall be very few, about the dress and equipment of the invalid traveller. As regards the voyage, it lies principally in tropical regions, but cold weather may be encountered in the Bay of Biscay, or off the Cape at the close. It is therefore necessary to be provided with both thick and thin clothing. The ships are well found, and the voyage is so easy that it may very well be recommended to any one who desires a little cruise on the sea without any intention of making a long stay on land. A steamer sails every

week, and the trip to Capetown occupies from twenty to three-and-twenty days. The fare includes board and lodgings, and if a return ticket is taken, does not cost much more than a stay of similar length at a first-class hotel.

After landing variety of clothing is still necessary. During the summer the nights are cool, and in the winter they are very cold. In the latter season it is cold also during the day out of the sunshine. Clothes are best taken from England, as they are dearer and not so well made at the Cape. It is very advisable to wear woollen material next to the skin, and a coloured flannel shirt is both safer and cleaner than a linen one. Two things must not be forgotten, that is to say, a cushion, and a pair of tinted spectacles. Whether travelling by ox waggon, horse waggon, or Cape cart, the cushion will, to some extent, mitigate the discomforts of the rough roads, and prevent abrasions. The glare of the sun is also trying at first, and the tinted spectacles will be duly appreciated. A light gauze veil to go all round the hat is not a bad means for protecting the face and neck from the hungry flies. I need hardly say that the anti-æsthetic but orthodox "pot hat" is distinctly contra-indicated (to borrow a word from the doctors). The best protection for the head is a light pith helmet, with a peak at the back sufficiently low to obviate the necessity of a puggaree.

As regards weapons, I may say that, except for purposes of sport, they are unnecessary. A man could travel from Port Elizabeth to Pretoria with far less risk from hostile attack than from Pimlico

to Mile End. For sporting purposes each one will suit his own taste. I may remark that it is difficult to procure any shot cartridges other than No. 12 bore outside the seaports; and that Martini-Henry and Remington cartridges are the only rifle ammunition likely to be met with in any part of the country.

Before concluding the invalid's portion of this chapter it is proper that I should indicate the class of lung patients for whom the country is best suited, and I avail myself of some remarks of my constant mentor, Dr. Williams,* in summarising the effects of altitude on cases of phthisis:—

"The patients who do best, are instances of limited consolidation at one apex, or of limited cavity, or of hemorrhagic phthisis. In most of these, complete arrest takes place; and what is most valuable in the mountain influence, it hardens people and makes them bear cold better afterwards. The cases of phthisis where mountain treatment is contra-indicated are all febrile patients, and those in whom the lungs are largely involved. . . . As regards patients suitable for a high altitude resort, at least two classes exist, (1) those benefited by the combination of cold and high altitude, and (2) those benefited by warmth and high altitude, and these points should be borne well in mind in the selection of a climate." In another part of the same article Dr. Williams considers that people with heart complaints ought not to try elevated regions.

I quote these remarks for the purpose of showing

* See the "Lancet" for Aug. 16th, 1879, p. 234.

that the high altitude treatment is not a panacea for all chest complaints. Considerable discretion is required before advising any one to try the South African uplands, or any other elevated region. The death of my friend, Dr. Lawton, proves that there are cases where it would be useless to hope for permanently beneficial results. I should recommend no one to make the voyage to South Africa without skilful professional advice, and without feeling certain that he is able to endure the exile from home, the deprivation, to a greater or less extent, of home comforts, and the absence of the familiar faces which have cheered the depression and melancholy engendered by illness.

AND now to fulfil my promise of giving a few words of advice to persons contemplating emigration to South Africa. I have indicated incidentally in other parts of the book many points to be attended to by emigrants. The chapter has already exceeded the proper length, and I must condense my advice as much as possible.

Some of the would-be emigrants to South Africa are persons with weak lungs, whose means do not admit of their paying a single visit or series of visits to the country, but whose condition compels them to leave their native home. These emigrants should carefully read over the preceding portion of this chapter, and especially the part which emphasises the advantages of a residence in the more elevated regions of the country. They should also bear in mind the advantages of an out-door life

when selecting their employment in the new country.

Other class of emigrants will be artisans or labourers in search of better wages than can be obtained at home; young men with strength and muscle, but without a great amount of ready money, and perhaps tempted by exaggerated statements to imagine some El-Dorado in the newly-acquired Transvaal territory; clerks and shopmen who think they can do better than at home; farmers forced to emigrate by the pressure of hard times in England; professional men, and men who are a trouble at home, and who are sent out of the way to become a nuisance in one of the colonies.

To the last class I have no encouragement to offer. There is no room for idlers; and drunkards will soon finish themselves off upon the vile cheap brandies in vogue at the Cape. There are opportunities for some of the other classes, but I advise labourers, clerks, mental workers, and specialists to keep away. There are too many black labourers already. It is true they cannot always be got to work, but there is no chance for an unskilled man in the presence of such an army. Clerks, too, are little wanted, and for every clerk's place there are a dozen applicants. Specialists are entirely at a discount.

The emigrants who are required are small capitalists, store or shopkeepers, skilled artisans of the all-round type, farmers, and doctors.

A man with a little money has an immense advantage. Money is very dear. Exceptional loans on

security of first-class real property realise 10 per cent. At the Diamond Fields money lenders were getting 10 per cent. *per month* on diamonds. The Boers never pay ready money if they can help it. They will pay twice over in goods rather than in cash. Hence a man who has some capital occupies a very advantageous position either as an investor or as a buyer for his own use.

A storekeeper with a little money can afford to sell his goods at long credit and large interest. He can take part payment in goods. He can buy cheap for ready money, and sell very dear for credit. If he has not enough capital, he will have to be "supported," or kept going by one of the large mercantile houses in the seaports, and will in time become their bond servant. If he has money enough to be independent, wit enough not to be cheated, and a faculty for hitting the requirements of his customers, he will be in a fair way of making a fortune. The larger storekeepers in the up-country towns are, as a rule, very intelligent men. Some of the stores are huge warehouses of a very miscellaneous character, where anything may be bought, from a pill to an iron house.

Skilled artisans make good wages. Carpenters, builders, joiners, or blacksmiths soon cease to be workmen, and become "bosses" over black labourers. An up-country smith or carpenter can command his own prices. He must be a man of intelligence, and prepared to turn his hand to anything, however remotely related to his trade. The class of artisans to be met with in the north country towns in Eng-

land, who come to mend a fender but will not touch a door knob, is not wanted in the colonies. Nor is the artisan who can "grind" but not "forge," or who can "fit" but not "turn." A man who can turn his hand to a plough or a door, a wheel or a window, is certain of employment, and of the best remuneration.

As regards farmers, I must candidly say that I do not think the man who has been accustomed to farming as it is practised in England will find his knowledge of much use to him at the Cape. The circumstances are entirely different. If he wishes to grow anything, he will have to irrigate; whereas in England he was irrigated by Nature, sometimes with too liberal a hand. He will have to deal with crops almost unknown at home, and provide for contingencies for which he is quite unprepared. Even sheep farming over the boundless plains, with black unskilled boys and open kraals in which to collect the sheep, is a different thing from the trim flocks and steadings at home. The practical farmer does not come with such preparation for the work as he imagines, and the young man with his few hundreds who has come out to try his luck is not so heavily handicapped as he may suppose.

Since my return I have been asked by more than one young man of adventurous ideas about Natal, or the Transvaal. My advice to all such is not to dream of buying a farm until they have gained some experience of the country. It is better to leave the bulk of the capital in safe hands at home, and only

to take out sufficient for personal requirements. The first year will not be lost by doing nothing but keeping the eyes open. There are always to be met at the seaports gentlemen who have a few farms on their hands, one of which "will just suit" the newly arrived settler panting to get to work. More experienced friends suggest caution, but the vendor is so fatherly and pleasant, and the green hand is so eager, that the bargain is settled very quickly. The new arrival hugs his title deeds with satisfaction, pluming himself on the diplomacy which has secured six or eight thousand acres for three or four hundred pounds. He restrains his impetuosity with difficulty, and posts up country in haste to inspect his purchase. He is lucky if he find any good grass on it, or any water, or if he find it at all. This is no fanciful picture. I could cite instances, if necessary, of money having been paid for farms which were not even in existence. Too much caution cannot be exercised in this respect. The Transvaal, especially, abounds in land speculators, who look upon a bargain about land with much the same views as a Yorkshireman looks upon the sale of a horse.

The best pursuit for a young would-be farmer to take to on reaching the country is "transport riding," or carrying goods. A little capital is required for the purchase of the necessary spans of oxen and waggons, but it pays very good interest on the outlay. Transport riding is a capital school for gaining knowledge of the country. The transport rider learns which are the best grasses, how to distinguish signs of water, what soil suits cattle and

what sheep or ostriches. In time he purchases a farm which he has marked down during his trips, and he launches on the new venture with an experience which will prevent his coming to grief at the outset.

Three sorts of farming hold out prospects to the man of capital; these are cattle, sheep, and ostrich farming. The latter is a paying industry, but it requires more capital to carry it out, and closer personal attention than the other branches. Sheep farming is most suited to the person with limited means. It is a common practice with the wealthier farmers to hire out sheep to beginners, receiving in return a stipulated part of the increase of the flocks. The lender of the sheep, of course, receives good interest on his money, but the plan furnishes a means of starting in life for an industrious and impecunious young man.

One of the great drawbacks to farming life is its loneliness. It is a hard thing for a young man to settle on some out of the way plain, miles from a white neighbour, and where he sees none but black faces, except at the rare intervals when he visits some village, perhaps a day's drive from his farm. The sense of loneliness often leads to habits of drinking, and drinking in South Africa kills men faster than in England.

Doctors are in great request up-country. Some of the doctors I was introduced to were enjoying large incomes. I could name one at least in an up-country village who was making three thousand pounds a year. In many of the up-country districts

the inhabitants will guarantee a certain income of three or five hundred pounds. A doctor's life in an inland district is no sinecure; but it has corresponding pecuniary advantages. South Africa offers golden opportunities to steady young men who would be kicking up their heels at home in vain attempts to establish a practice.

IT has been suggested to me that I ought to say something on South African politics. I have no special training on the subject, and I cannot speak upon it with any greater authority than other people. I shall, therefore, refrain from committing myself further than by saying a few very brief words on the prospects of the country as a member of Greater Britain, and as a home for emigrants from the mother-hive of England.

South Africa has hitherto not been a favourite colony with emigrants. It is nearer to England than any of the other colonies to which emigrants resort, except Canada. It has a much less trying climate than Canada, and the latter country has had similar difficulties in the presence of a large native population, and of a couquered and, for many years, an alien white race. And yet, for one emigrant who goes to the Cape fifty go to Canada, and a hundred to New Zealand or Australia, which are much farther from home.

The principal reasons which have prevented emigration are apparently the proximity of the South African colonies to active and hostile native tribes; the native wars which have from time to time

broken out, and have had the double effect of impeding the progress of the country and frightening settlers away; the presence, within the border, of large numbers of semi-civilised natives, who supply the labour requirements of the country; the Boer element, with its dislike to disturbance and advancing ideas; the selfish policy of the English Africanders; the internal squabbles of the white settlers, and their lack of energy; the want of encouragement to emigrants, and the absence of an intelligent native policy. To these causes may be added the unpromising appearance of great tracts of country such as the Karroo, and the great absence of knowledge with respect to the capabilities of the Eastern Districts and the High Veld.

As regards the natives, I trust that the happy termination of the Zulu War, the consequent breaking up of Ketchwayo's imitation of Tchaka's system, and the deposition of that bloodthirsty and ambitious chieftain, coupled with the decisive defeat of the hostile Kaffirs further south, will result in a prolonged peace. Peace alone will give opportunities to the colonists to push forward the development of the country, which was stimulated by the discovery of the Diamond Fields, but which has been retarded of late by the wars and rumours of wars all over the country. It is conceded on all hands that a more intelligent native policy is needed. Hitherto the natives have been pitchforked into locations, with full privilege to drink themselves to death, and to indulge *ad libitum* in the vicious pursuits which their own superstitions prescribe, and also in those

which unrestrained intercourse with white neighbours induces in an uncivilised people. The present Cape Ministry have declared themselves in favour of an active policy of civilisation, and the future will testify to the soundness of their views. Natives must not be left to themselves. It is the duty of the white man to do something more than take their land and sell them drink. In Natal, the location policy has been carried out to an extreme, and the country is dotted over with patches of natives who could sweep the white men off the face of the country if they understood their power. During the late war with the Zulus, the Natal people were very uncertain about the temper of their own natives. The sowing of dragon's teeth may end in the leaping forth of armed men. It is to be hoped that Natal will take a lesson, and adopt a more benevolent and rational native policy.

As regards the Transvaal, now that Ketchwayo is dethroned, and Sekkukuni on the eve of being broken down, there is little danger to be feared from other quarters. The Boers will not rise against English rule, and the natives within the borders and to the west and south are too timid to fight. The Transvaal has suffered very much from over praise; but, despite this fact, I cannot help thinking that in twenty or thirty years it will be not by any means the least important of the South African colonies.

Next to the solution of the native policy, the most pressing question is confederation. The idea of confederation was scouted at first, but it is gaining

great power, and the present Government of the Cape Colony have given their adhesion to it. The conclusion of the war and the pacification of Zululand, will possibly lead to the realisation of the idea. There is one member of the South African countries which is strongly opposed to confederation, which would bring it under the influence of the British Government. I refer to the Orange Free State. There is no present reason for annexing it; and the best way out of the difficulty will be to confederate all round it, and leave it to a seclusion which will in time effect the desired result.

Minor reforms, helping towards the full use of South Africa as an English colony, are the gradual substitution of the Common law for the cumbrous, non-progressive Roman-Dutch laws in force at the Cape, and the disuse of the bastard and ugly Dutch dialect, which I have before described. But next to an improved native policy and a confederation of conflicting interests, the great want of the country is the encouragement of emigration, and the recognition of the doctrine that people, and not land, make a nation. Natal is the only one of the colonies which has held out any invitation to emigrants. Cape Colony has systematically turned the cold shoulder to them, notwithstanding that she owes almost everything to the emigration of 1820, which gave an impetus to the colony that bears fruit even now. Emigration is discouraged by a party of English-born settlers, who raise the cry of "Africa for the Africanders," and who steadily set their faces against any infusion of new blood into the country, in strange forgetful-

ness of the fact that all the great nations of the past were mixed races. I have some sympathy with the Boers, who, despite their numerous failings, have some grit at the bottom; but I have none with the half-hearted Englishmen whose selfish policy, constant only in its narrowness of ideas, forms an obstacle to the upward progress of the country. Fortunately, more liberal ideas are springing up. A new policy has been inaugurated, and an Act favourable to emigration has recently been passed in Cape Colony. It is a fortunate circumstance for the chief colony that it has at its head, at the present time, a man who, though much abused by half informed people, has its real interests at heart, and who has given an impetus to its advancement by his far-seeing and sympathetic policy. I am afraid on some subjects I am rather Utopian, but I look forward to a time in the distant future when confederated South Africa will take its proper place among a great confederation of populous English nations under the leadership of Great Britain, and embracing within its limits the vast spaces in America, Africa, and Australia, now slowly filling up with people of Anglo-Saxon blood and citizens of the great British empire.

# APPENDIX.

## METEOROLOGICAL AND ALTITUDE TABLES.

### TABLE No. 1.

**ABSTRACT of the Mean Annual Results from Meteorological Stations within the Cape of Good Hope, and from Maritsburg, Natal (from the Government Colonisation Circular).**

| Names of Stations. | Mean height of Barometer, reduced to temperature 32° Fah. and to the Observatory Standard. | Temperature, Fahr. | | | | Mean Annual Humidity at 9 a.m., 1 and 5 p.m. | Mean Annual Falls of Rain. | Mean Annual Number of Lightning or Thunderstorms. | Approximate Heights of the Stations above the Sea Level. | Years of Observation from which the Results are derived. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Mean Annual. | Mean Daily Range. | Highest. | Lowest. | | | | | |
| | inches. | ° | ° | ° | ° | per cent. | inches. | No. | feet. | |
| Graaff-Reinet ..... | 27·508 | 64·41 | 24·52 | 105·0 | 28·0 | 55·98 | 13·196 | 23 | 2,517 | 1863–64–65. |
| Worcester..... | 29·265 | 62·88 | 24·91 | 106·5 | 29·5 | 54·91 | 11·795 | 14 | 776 | 1862 to 1868. |
| Mossel Bay ..... | 29·608 | 63·90 | 17·78 | 97·0 | 39·0 | 69·47 | 11·550 | 2 | 429 | 1862. |
| Somerset West..... | 29·931 | 61·89 | 20·88 | 98·0 | 34·4 | 68·83 | 26·671 | 3 | 124 | 1862–63. |
| Simon's Town ..... | 30·028 | 65·14 | 15·00 | 95·0 | 42·0 | 79·17 | 29·489 | 4 | 50 | 1862–63–64–65. |
| Royal Observatory | 30·031 | 62·88 | 14·11 | 99·5 | 39·8 | 72·00 | 22·476 | 15 | 87 | 1862 to 1868. |
| Port Elisabeth..... | 29·878 | 63·21 | 14·16 | 92·0 | 41·0 | 71·24 | 26·685 | — | 190 | 1867–68. |
| Graham's Town ... | 30·026 | 62·65 | 18·59 | 106·5 | 32·5 | 70·30 | 32·594 | — | 1,750 | 1855 to 1859. |
| Aliwal North ..... | — | 59·30 | 23·50 | 93·0 | 20·0 | — | 18·910 | 21 | 4,500 | 1867. |
| Maritzburg ..... | 27·596 | 64·83 | — | 97·6 | 29·0 | 70·80 | 30·230 | 63 | 2,096 | 1856 to 1865. |

TABLE No. 2.

Table of days on which rain falls at Cape Town, and observations on the general rainfall of the colony, extracted from Noble's "Descriptive Handbook of the Cape Colony," published by E. Stanford, Charing Cross.

| Year. | January. | February. | March. | April. | May. | June. | July. | August. | September. | October. | November. | December. | Total. | Amount of rain. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | days | days | days | days | days | days | days | days | days | days | days | days | days | in. |
| 1852 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 11 | 8 | 11 | 10 | 6 | 12 | 11 | 8 | 103 | ... |
| 1858 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 10 | 14 | 8 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 93 | 24·1 |
| 1859 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 12 | 14 | 13 | 15 | 6 | 13 | 6 | 7 | 105 | 36·7 |
| 1862 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 15 | 14 | 15 | 10 | 14 | 8 | 2 | 105 | 32·0 |

The rainfall at Bishop's Court and Wynberg, along Table Mountain, is 44 and 39 inches per annum respectively; while at Worcester it is only 11 inches; at Bredasdorp (Caledon Coast), 14 inches; at Amalienstein, 31 inches; at Concordia, Namaqualand, about 9 inches; at Lower Nels Point (Beaufort West), 9½ inches; Goliath's Kraal, near Graaff-Reinet, 13½ inches; at Port Elizabeth, 26 inches; at Graaff-Reinet, 14 inches; and at * Aliwal North about 25 inches.

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TABLE No. 3.

Rainfall at Lower Nelspoort, near Beaufort West, Western Province, Cape Colony, for part of 1877, taken by Mr. A. S. Jackson.

| | |
|---|---|
| April, from 21st ... ... ... ... ... | ·00 |
| May ... ... ... ... ... ... | ·48 |
| June ... ... ... ... ... ... | ·11 |
| July ... ... ... ... ... ... | ·07 |
| August ... ... ... ... ... ... | ·00 |
| September ... ... ... ... ... ... | ·00 |
| October ... ... ... ... ... ... | 1·46 |
| November ... ... ... ... ... ... | ·18 |
| December ... ... ... ... ... ... | ·16 |
| Total for eight months ... | 2·46 |

* See preceding Table.

TABLE No. 4.

Rainfall at Brakfontein, Victoria West, Western Province, Cape Colony, during five years. Taken by Mr. S. Jackson.

| | 1873. | 1874. | 1875. | 1876. | 1877. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| January ... ... | 1·20 | ·97 | ·67 | 5·35 | ·41 | 8·60 |
| February ... ... | 1·98 | 2·27 | 1·85 | 2·69 | ·71 | 9·50 |
| March ... ... | 1·31 | 1·80 | 1·23 | 2·58 | ·52 | 7·44 |
| April ... ... ... | ·22 | ·75 | ·92 | ·42 | ·18 | 2·49 |
| May ... ... ... | 1·77 | ·00 | 1·55 | 1·35 | ·43 | 5·10 |
| June ... ... ... | ·00 | ·00 | 1·04 | ·54 | ·00 | 1·58 |
| July ... ... ... | ·18 | ·43 | ·11 | ·17 | ·37 | 1·26 |
| August ... ... | ·07 | ·04 | ·13 | ·00 | ·00 | ·24 |
| September ... ... | ·09 | ·05 | ·00 | 1·50 | ·00 | 1·64 |
| October ... ... | ·20 | ·28 | ·81 | ·43 | 1·43 | 3·15 |
| November ... ... | 2·05 | 2·44 | 3·55 | ·88 | ·10 | 9·02 |
| December ... ... | ·39 | 2·56 | 2·89 | ·00 | ·31 | 6·15 |
| Totals ... ... | 9·46 | 11·59 | 14·75 | 15·91 | 4·46 | 56·17 |

Average of four years, 1873–76, 12·9275.

The rainfall of 1877 is thus only one-third of the average of the previous four years; or, more exactly, it is 8·4675 less than such average. The months stand in the following order, beginning with the one in which most rain fell during the last five years, namely: February, November, January, March, December, May, October, April, September, June, July, August.

SIDNEY JACKSON.

January 8, 1878.

TABLE No. 5.

Meteorological Observations at Bloemfontein, of the months of January, February, and part of March, 1878. Taken by Dr. Lawton.

| Date. | Barometer. | Mean Temp. | Max. Temp. | Min. Temp. | Mean humidity, complete saturation=100 | Rainfall (inches). |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| January 7 | 25·00 | 85 | 94 | 66 | 38 | 8 to 14: 0·270 |
| „ 14 | 25·12 | 88 | 89 | 67 | 56 | 15 & 17: 0·342 |
| „ 21 | 25·26 | 80 | 86 | 64 | 48 | 26: 0·122 |
| „ 28 | 25·72 | 88 | 94 | 70 | 41 | 30 & 1: 0·376 |
| February 4 | 24·98 | 77 | 88 | 65 | 44 | 11: 1·918 |
| „ 11 | 25·09 | 82 | 90 | 70 | 52 | 15 to 17: 2·417 |
| „ 18 | 25·10 | 76 | 81 | 67 | 74 | 21 to 25: 2·257 |
| „ 25 | 25·10 | 77 | 83 | 67 | 77½ | 27 & 28: 0·407 |
| March 4 | 25·17 | 73 | 77½ | 65 | 68½ | 5 & 6: 1·871 |
| „ 11 | 25·20 | 75 | 78½ | 63 | 59½ | 14 to 17: 0·475 |
| „ 18 | 25·12 | 74½ | 79½ | 63 | 59½ | |
| „ 25 | 25·12 | 68 | 72 | 55 | 61 | 0·614 |

The above are the mean observations for the weeks ending on the dates mentioned in the first column. The greatest difference between the wet and dry bulbs, during Summer (January), amounted to 29°.

TABLE No. 5*a*.

I have no complete tables for a later period of the year; but I subjoin one showing a week's data at the period when the winter is approaching, and season visitors begin to leave.

| Date. | Barometer. | Mean Temp. | Max. Temp. | Min. Temp. | Mean humidity, complete saturation = 100. | Rainfall. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1879 | | | | | | |
| April 3 | 25·11<br>25·00 | 62·5 | 73 | 52 | 75 | |
| „ 4 | 25·08<br>25·04 | 63·5 | 73 | 54 | 64 | |
| „ 5 | 25·08<br>25·04 | 63 | 73 | 53 | 69 | 0·073 |
| „ 6 | 25·14<br>25·09 | 64 | 76 | 52 | 62 | |
| „ 7 | 25·18<br>25·10 | 64·5 | 76 | 53 | 70 | |
| „ 8 | 25·15<br>25·05 | 64·5 | 76 | 53 | 70·5 | |
| „ 9 | 25·03<br>24·97 | 71 | 76 | 66 | 54 | |

## Table No. 6.

Taken in the Town of Pretoria, Transvaal, during the period from September 1st, 1875, to December 31st, 1878. By J. R. Lys, Esq.

*Note.*—The thermometer is Stewart's, and the observations are taken under a verandah with northern aspect. The observations from which the monthly mean is derived are calculated from *five* daily observations, taken at 6 a.m., 9 a.m., 12 noon, 3 p.m., and 8 p.m.

| Months. | Thermometer. | | | State of the Weather. | | | | | Rainfall, in inches. | Dry Bulb. | Wet Bulb. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Monthly Mean. | Max. | Min. | Fine Days. | Cloudy Days. | Number of Winds. | Number of Rains. | Number of Thunderstorms. | | | |
| September, 1875 | 67·34 | 85 | 56 | 22 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 5 | ... | ... | ... |
| October ... | 65·60 | 85 | 52 | 21 | 10 | 5 | 10 | 4 | ... | ... | ... |
| November ... | 69·40 | 89 | 59 | 11 | 17 | 7 | 12 | 4 | ... | ... | ... |
| December ... | 70·15 | 85 | 62 | 20 | 9 | 0 | 13 | 2 | ... | ... | ... |
| January, 1876... | 72·06 | 88 | 63 | 13 | 15 | 0 | 14 | 3 | ... | ... | ... |
| February ... | 73·41 | 89 | 65 | 24 | 4 | 2 | 13 | 1 | ... | ... | ... |
| March ... | 69·20 | 87 | 54 | 19 | 9 | 1 | 6 | 3 | ... | ... | ... |
| April ... | 64·53 | 82 | 52 | 15 | 15 | 1 | 12 | 0 | ... | ... | ... |
| May ... | 62·81 | 81 | 51 | 28 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | .. | ... | ... |
| June ... | 59·19 | 79 | 40 | 25 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | ... | ... | ... |
| July ... | 59·46 | 78 | 43 | 28 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | ... | ... | ... |
| August ... | 65·00 | 85 | 48 | 25 | 3 | 7 | 0 | 2 | ... | .. | ... |
| September ... | 67·49 | 87 | 51 | 22 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 8 | ... | ... | ... |
| October ... | 66·60 | 85 | 51 | 20 | 11 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 2·08 | 68 | 59‡ |
| November ... | 69·35 | 90 | 54 | 17 | 3 | 14 | 2 | 4 | 0·66 | 68 | 58 |
| December ... | 70·65 | 88 | 61 | 28 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 2·58 | 73 | 62 |
| January, 1877... | 74·90 | 92 | 64 | 21 | 10 | 0 | 17 | 11 | 5·50 | 69 | 61 |
| February ... | 73·13 | 86 | 62 | 28 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 4·03 | 70 | 63 |
| March ... | 70·45 | 85 | 54 | 26 | 12 | 13 | 4 | 0 | 1·61 | 70 | 63 |
| April ... | 69·12 | 83 | 55 | 28 | 0 | 12 | 2 | 2 | 0·25 | 68 | 60 |
| May ... | 68·05 | 84 | 52 | 20 | 9 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 1·74 | 62 | 55 |
| June ... | 62·40 | 73 | 43 | 27 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0·00 | 56 | 49 |
| July ... | 60·75 | 82 | 42 | 21 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0·12 | 57 | 52 |
| August ... | 59·15 | 82 | 43 | 29 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0·00 | 63 | 53 |
| September ... | 68·09 | 86 | 49 | 21 | 3 | 16 | 3 | 1 | 2·69 | 64 | 58 |
| October ... | 70·65 | 85 | 51 | 24 | 10 | 11 | 7 | 1 | 1·67 | 66 | 57 |
| November ... | 72·85 | 88 | 53 | 20 | 7 | 14 | 7 | 4 | 1·01 | ... | ... |
| December ... | 75·16 | 89 | 62 | 22 | 3 | 10 | 11 | 4 | 2·83* | ... | ... |
| January, 1878... | 77·75 | 95 | 66 | 25 | 2 | 14 | 10 | 5 | 6·62 | ... | ... |
| February ... | 76·85 | 88 | 64 | 22 | 0 | 15 | 6 | 8 | 4·59 | ... | ... |
| March ... | 73·33 | 87 | 60 | 28 | 1 | 11 | 8 | 1 | 4·30 | ... | ... |
| April ... | 71·17 | 85 | 56 | 24 | 1 | 16 | 0 | 1 | 0·00 | ... | ... |
| May ... | 67·06 | 84 | 52 | 23 | 0 | 12 | 3 | 0 | 1 52 | ... | ... |
| June ... | 61·16 | 74 | 41 | 26 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0·00 | ... | ... |
| July ... | 60·33 | 83 | 43 | 21 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 1·30 | ... | ... |
| August ... | 59·00 | 81 | 43 | 23 | 0 | 16 | 3 | 2 | 0·63 | ... | ... |
| September ... | 70·66 | 90 | 46 | 23 | 2 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0·00 | ... | ... |
| October ... | 75·20 | 94 | 55 | 25 | 1 | 21 | 8 | 5 | 0·48 | ... | ... |
| November ... | 74·00 | 89 | 60 | 21 | 1 | 17 | 6 | 6 | 2·43 | ... | ... |
| December ... | 70·00 | 87 | 61 | 23 | 0 | 19 | 14 | 9 | 4·76† | ... | ... |

* Total Rainfall, 1877, 21·45 in. † Total Rainfall, 1878, 26·63 in.
‡ Part of November only.

TABLE No. 7.

Rainfall at Aliwal North, in the Eastern Province of Cape Colony, on the Orange River, from observations by Mr. Dowling, between the years 1866–1874.

| Month. | Rainfall in inches. | Rainy days. |
|---|---|---|
| January ... ... ... | 3·77 | 24 |
| February ... ... ... | 4·89 | 11·5 |
| March ... ... ... | 3·32 | 12·5 |
| April ... ... ... ... | 1·83 | 8 |
| May ... ... ... ... | 1·11 | 7 |
| June ... ... ... ... | ·56 | 2 |
| July ... ... ... ... | ·47 | 3 |
| August ... ... ... | ·51 | 4 |
| September ... ... ... | ·77 | 6 |
| October ... ... ... | 2·04 | 8 |
| November ... ... ... | 2·87 | 9 |
| December ... ... ... | 2·99 | 10 |
| Mean annual fall = | 25·31 ins. over | 95 rainy days |

TABLE No. 8.

Average rainfall and temperature over a period of ten years; and average number of thunderstorms and hot winds over eight years, at Maritzburg in *Natal* (2,095 feet above sea level); collected from tables in Brook's and Mann's "Natal," published by L. Reeve & Co., Henrietta Street, Covent Garden.

| Month. | Rainfall. | Temperature. | Thunderstorms. | Hot winds. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| January ... ... | 3·27 | 71·6 | 7⅛ | 1·5 |
| February ... ... | 4·45 | 71·8 | 8⅜ | 1·2 |
| March ... ... | 3·40 | 69·7 | 5⅜ | ·7 |
| April ... ... | 1·58 | 65·0 | 3⅛ | ·9 |
| May ... ... | ·75 | 58·8 | 1⅛ | 1·2 |
| June ... ... | ·23 | 55·1 | ¼ | ·9 |
| July ... ... | ·25 | 55·7 | ⅛ | 2·4 |
| August ... ... | 1·01 | 60·3 | 1⅛ | 3·2 |
| September ... | 1·41 | 64·8 | 3⅛ | 5·1 |
| October ... ... | 3·29 | 66·1 | 6⅜ | 4·2 |
| November... ... | 4·91 | 69·4 | 7½ | 3·0 |
| December... ... | 4·87 | 70·3 | 7⅞ | 1·7 |

TABLE No. 9.

Approximate altitudes by aneroid barometer.

| Country. | Place. | Feet above sea level. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Own observations. | Dr. Leech's. |
| Cape Colony, Western Districts ... ... | Highest point on Karroo | 3,200 | |
| ,, ,, | Beaufort West ... ... | 2,900 | |
| ,, ,, | Zout River Drift ... | 3,100 | |
| ,, ,, | Dreifontein ... ... | 3,300 | |
| ,, ,, | Murraysburg ... ... | 3,800 | |
| Upper Midland Districts | Richmond ... ... | 4,800 | |
| ,, ,, | Schuurfontein ... ... | 5,000 | |
| ,, ,, | Colesberg ... ... | 4,650 | 4,700 |
| Eastern Districts ... | Middleburg ... ... | ... | 4,200 |
| ,, ,, ... | Cradock ... ... | ... | 3,000 |
| ,, ,, ... | Bedford ... ... | ... | 2,500 |
| ,, ,, ... | Dordrecht ... ... | 4,700 | |
| ,, ,, ... | Top of Katberg ... | 5,100 | |
| ,, ,, ... | Bottom of Katberg ... | 2,850 | |
| Orange Free State ... | Philippolis ... ... | ... | 4,600 |
| ,, ,, ... | Bethany ... ... | ... | 4,600 |
| ,, ,, ... | Bloemfontein ... ... | 4,750 | 4,700 |
| ,, ,, ... | Kroonstad ... ... | 4,650 | |
| Transvaal ... ... | Potchefstroom ... ... | (?)4,450 | 4,780 |
| ,, ... ... | Highest point on road between Potchefstroom and Pretoria ... ... | 5,200 | |
| ,, ... ... | Pretoria ... ... | 4,450 same height given by Jeppe | 4,620 |
| ,, ... ... | Rustenburg ... ... | 3,700 | |
| ,, ... ... | Heidelberg ... ... | ... | 5,400 |
| ,, ... ... | Wakkerstroom (Zulu border) ... ... | ... | 6,000 |
| ,, ... ... | Utrecht (ditto)... ... | ... | 4,300 |
| Natal ... ... ... | Newcastle ... ... | ... | 4,100 |
| ,, ... ... ... | Colenso ... ... ... | ... | 3,320 |
| ,, ... ... ... | Estcourt ... ... | ... | 3,900 |
| ,, ... ... ... | Howick ... ... ... | ... | 3,700 |
| ,, ... ... ... | Maritzburg ... ... (Properly 2,950) | ... | 2,600 |

The figures given as Dr. Leech's are quoted from a paper given me by a friend; and were taken during a medical trip by the observer, Dr. Harry Leech, in the summer and wet season. This may account for the discrepancies in some of the altitudes.

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